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Bullock: A Study in Democracy

There are not many achievements of this Labour Government to which socialists can point with equanimity, let alone pride. The same could, and has, been said of a number of Labour governments. In their defence one can only, wearily, recall Montesquieu's description of government as 'a blunt file working slowly and arriving slowly at its end'. So it is all the more welcome a relief that in the case of industrial democracy the present Labour cabinet has nailed, however nervously, its colours to the mast. The only doubt is whether Callaghan, Varley (or, most of all, Dell) have the courage of their convictions, or whether the weaker sisters will baulk at the CBI bluster of investment strikes, flight of capital, and the withdrawal of cooperation. Cabinet members, such as Shirley Williams, have in the past gone on record proclaiming the principle of industrial democracy as the corner-stone of Labour policy in the next decade, and yet, strangely, nearly half the cabinet, including apparently Mrs Williams, are back pedalling as fast as their cold feet will carry them.

No issue in post-war politics has won such widespread symbolic public support across the political spectrum and yet, in reality, no issue so effectively separates the sheep from the goats. It is possible to be pragmatic and accept that some participation is a fair compromise in return for TUC wage restraint. It is possible to argue in the spirit of the post-1926 Mond/Turner talks, and on the basis of a wealth of literature, that participation in managerial decisions increases identity with the firm and, hence, productivity. But this is about as inspirational as saying that the repeal of the Corn Laws was justified by the reduction in the price of the loaf and that any diminution in the power of the landed classes was merely a casual by-product.

The most fundamental claim of industrial democrats is that ownership of capital, inherited or not, cannot be a sufficient criterion for monopolising power and decision-making in a work place. If Labour is genuinely concerned about the distribution of power in Britain (and devolution suggests that it has such pretensions), then it must permit, as a minimum, workers in private and public companies not merely the right of a trip to the polling stations once every five years but also the opportunity to have a personal say in how they work. (And the sooner the civil service's separate investigation into nationalised industries comes into the open the better.)

For the moment we can only digest the public inquiry into companies in the private sector. Bullock's report is impressive in its mastery of detail, its assimilation of the conflicting arguments, and thoughtful in the way that it has taken account of the pitfalls and successes of comparative European experiments. For these reasons alone, Bullock's proposals are not the leap in the dark the CBI wish to portray.

Collective bargaining has now been extended to its logical limits and a new frontier needs to be opened. By accepting that with industrial democracy there is another front on which the age-old conflict between capital and labour can be worked out, the trade unions are admitting that they must rethink their traditional stance and that the price of this will be to reorganise and democratise themselves.

Of course the CBI can easily fulfil their own prophecy by making the proposals impractical if they so want. Their present position is, at best, irrelevant, and, at worst, an arrogant piece of industrial sabotage. Their principal tactic is one of outright opposition to any worker representatives, dovetailed with a meaningless reference to building industrial democracy from the bottom. Their fall-back offer of two-tier boards and minority worker representatives through a channel separate from the trade unions, with restricted rights of disclosure of information, is insulting to the Bullock Committee's research and any generally accepted definition of participation. Their 'compromise' would rapidly establish a group of worker representatives alienated from, and powerless to help, the workforce from which they came. The CBI owe Bullock, and Britain, a better case than this: Mr Callaghan's answer will be the test of the strength of will of his government.

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Spotlight on Politics

James Fenton

Democracy and Shirley Williams

I can offer no *definition* of my own political views at the moment, but I can point to a book which exemplifies the set of attitudes with which I sympathise. The book is *Homage to Catalonia* and, since Orwell owns in the course of it that according to certain definitions he is a Trotskyist, I suppose that makes me a Trotskyist. The trouble with the word Trotskyist is that it is much more useful as a term of abuse than as a definition. You will recall that, at the time Orwell was writing, it was widely considered that the POUM were fascists, or at least in an objective alliance with the fascists. To my astonishment, I heard the same views expressed the other day by Judith Hart. Orwell recounts in his book how he came to Barcelona, saw what a democratic revolution was, decided to fight for it, and then saw how the Communist Party set about destroying the democracy and, in consequence, the revolution. His views were not popular at the time (particularly with such people as the editor of the NEW STATESMAN), but much of what he said in the book has since been widely accepted. To such a Trotskyist, democracy, socialism and revolution were indivisible.

To Shirley Williams, on the other hand, such a creature as Orwell then was would be unthinkable. He would either be the victim of the grossest self-deception, or he would be engaged in purveying a calculated lie. I should like to take issue with Williams on this point, and it would be very nice if she deigned to reply to a few questions. In her speech in Derbyshire last Friday she always blurred the distinction between democracy, parliamentary democracy and representative democracy. Since the text had been prepared, I presume she had thought this over in advance. Does she actually believe that a society without a Westminster could never be democratic? I mean, even in *theory*? And just how much are we allowed to tamper with the model? If Westminster is necessary, what are the necessary features that make it Westminster? Is Black Rod necessary? Is the post of Prime Minister essential? Is the almost total lack of accountability of Labour MPs to their constituency parties (or, indeed their constituencies) a vital feature of democracy?

Some of these questions are topical. One highly topical question is that of industrial democracy, and it is one which Williams appears to have deliberately fudged. For it is an essential feature of Marxist thought and of the left-wing movements today (or at least the best of them). The criticism of parliamentary democracy stems from the belief that it is not real, not democratic enough. The aim of such movements is to create a society in which the worker can in fact control his own life: democracy is axiomatic in Marxian socialism (as it was not in previous kinds of socialism), but it is located in society and not in one building. Williams must have heard of this, but she takes Marx's doubts about the efficacy of certain institutions to be doubts about democracy itself. This gives her some convenient, but bad, points to make.

On the question of implementing the Bullock proposals, the divisions have already begun. The Left in the cabinet believe they would extend democracy, and are therefore in favour. Some of the Right in the cabinet have argued that Bullock would, if implemented, be to Labour a kind of Industrial Relations Act in reverse – that is to say, it would lose the Government what support it has from the CBI, bring Labour down and put in the Tories. The Prime Minister has already privately expressed his fears on this score. But there are also some Labour politicians who believe that the Bullock proposals do not amount to a genuine extension of industrial democracy – that they coopt trade unionists into serving a cause which conflicts with their interests.

But everyone on the Left is in favour of some form of industrial democracy. Williams herself seems to be, since she says in her Derbyshire speech that 'we cannot always expect everyone to be enthusiastic about the changes that we socialists propose – the comprehensive reorganisation of schools, the introduction of industrial democracy, and so on.' The essential thing, she says, is that such measures should receive the consent of 'people' before they are introduced. What she does not say, however, is how that consent is to be determined. Suppose (just suppose) that a majority in the country wanted Bullock (or even some more radical measure) and that the CBI set out to wreck it, what would Williams do? Would she shy away, for fear of the CBI? Or would she stand her ground and fight it out?

In the present circumstances (but perhaps she would now like to make her position plainer) I suspect that she will be among those who want to give the whole matter more thought, so much more thought that, by the time the thinking is over, the thinkers will have forgotten what thought it was that they set out with in the first place. That would certainly be one way of tackling the problem. But Williams must be aware that, when the revolutionary Left claims that socialism cannot (or cannot normally) be achieved through parliamentary means, it is conflicts of this kind that they are thinking about. Labour has a good idea, it sets out to achieve it, it gets to power and has the opportunity, it makes the first move and the – oh dear, suddenly it comes up against a real vested interest. Sadly, regretfully, it is 'blown off course'. All Labour can do, it is claimed, is make marginal improvements. It cannot reform capitalism out of of existence.

Now, I am not for a moment suggesting that Williams wants to reform capitalism out of existence (although perhaps she would like to make her position on *this* question plainer) but she would clearly like to do something about it and, if she considers industrial democracy to be on a par with comprehensive education, it's obviously fairly important to her. So, without wishing to *egg her on*, might I suggest that she avoids the temptation to avoid the issue? Indeed, might it not be a good way of stealing the Trotskyist trousers to make radical industrial democracy *the* Labour Party cause? Or is that just boring old Bennery?

A word about the Trotskyist movement in Britain. It was founded, not out of a brutal desire to tear society apart, have blood flowing in the streets and abolish democracy and liberty, but out of a movement for world peace, the end of exploitation and for the socialist distribution of wealth. It does not, as Williams insinuated, fail to condemn the societies of the Communist bloc. It was founded on a condemnation of those societies. The circumstances of its appeal to the generation of young socialists whom it drew into its ranks were, in particular, the war in Indochina. It considered the Wilson Government impossibly tainted during that war, and it wished to have no part in a system of world politics which was bound up with such ventures. It considered the maintenance of war economies a vital feature of societies both East and West. It considered the maintenance of dictatorship in South America a vital feature of North American democracy. And it considered the US economy vital to the maintenance of British social democracy. Social democracy only works where capitalism works.

When people talk about the democracies of Ancient Greece, which were in so many respects more sophisticated than our own, they often sneer at the fact that such societies had slaves. It seems to rob the democracy of its pretensions, to deny it its universality. I have yet to hear a social democrat of the Williams mould give a convincing reply when the same charge is made against European social democracy. Are we not much worse than Athens? Is our pleasant democracy not founded upon repression? This is another question to which Williams might care to offer an answer, if she has a moment.

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David Haworth

Mr Jenkins's Europe

The New Year and the new European Commission, though in significant respects both look like the old ones, have caused many in the Common Market capital to become excitable in a manner totally unjustified by events. Roy Jenkins's arrival had been talked of in terms suggesting that its importance was scarcely less interesting than the Second Coming, and this impression was sustained in some quarters even though the saviour in a rumpled suit showed a marked preference for speaking his own language, and a determination that some complacent heads, regardless of nationality, should be put on the chopping block.

Both these aspects of his first few appearances here are to the good: linguistically and administratively reform of the European Commission is overdue by at least the four years since the Community has been enlarged. At last the EEC is beginning to feel its transition from Six to Nine – as the volume of francophone squawks clearly indicates. Roughly translated, they say something to the effect that, of course, it's understood Jenkins had to make some changes in his new parish, but he should have taken more time, been a little more sensitive towards some extremely well-paid egos. They add that Jenkins has now built up a sizeable resentment among some Eurocrats which will cost him dear.

He has, and it won't. To delay shuffling top responsibilities around would be an Ortoli-like formula for doing nothing at all. 'Le Roi Jean *Quinze*', as he has already been dubbed – well, just try saying Jenkins in French – will never have a better opportunity or reason to change staff who had been allowed to feel they held their jobs for life, or anyway until elbowed aside by men from Athens anxious to fill their own national quota of Commission jobbery.

Inevitably, then, Jenkins has been preoccupied by personnel matters in his first few weeks. He gave a fine speech to his immediate colleagues (some punch-drunk and one just drunk, from their squabble about which responsibility should go to whom). He also delivered a rousing speech to the European Parliament promising its members that the Commission would henceforward treat them as though they were already directly elected representatives. This sounds good, but what in practice will it mean? Not much, I'm afraid. Unlike a Premier, a Commission President *emerges*: there is no manifesto, only a general indication based on past form of what he might be inclined to do or what his preferences could be. Apart from that, he has complete licence to point the Commission whither he chooses.

Internal evidence suggests he has not yet chosen. Commonsense suggests he should take his time. In a pre-Christmas speech in Britain he frankly accepted that what was at stake was nothing less than a test of whether such a Community can survive in a form which has even tangentially to do with the Treaty of Rome, whose twentieth anniversary is being celebrated this year. His comments are a kind of insurance against failure, but no less valid for that. The change of Commission brings small possibility of improvement in the EEC's fortunes. Although towards the end of 1976 the Community showed some signs of recovery from the world recession, the outlook is still gloomy. The coming oil price rise, continuing currency instability, and the probability that inflation will not be much modified this year, plus the fact that unemployment has become structural, all point to a dismal perspective for the Jenkins Age. What was a fair-weather Community

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during most of its existence has become, and will continue to be, a victim of circumstances it is powerless to control – assuming, in the first place, that it had the legal competence to make the attempt, which it has not.

To compensate, in the recent past the EEC has had a series of spectacular successes in regulating relations with the rest of the world. A lattice-work of trade-and-aid deals now covers almost the entire developing world. From Fiji to Egypt to the Far East, from Mexico to Yugoslavia, the EEC has made its imprint with an effect which would have seemed inconceivable even when Britain signed her way into the Community. But officials are under no illusions that mere trade agreements will in themselves prove sufficient to hold the EEC together.

The importance of being Jenkins will be mainly determined by his view of how the Commission should operate. Is he to follow his predecessor's policy of trimming every proposal to the lowest common denominator to cause least offence to the member governments? In his time Ortoli tried to reach a consensus which would – in theory, though hardly in practice – permit Commission ideas to go through the Council of Ministers on the nod. The French did have intermittent successes with this tactic, especially when dealing with EEC foreign relations, but it was limited. That is one option for the new President. The other, strongly urged by some of his colleagues, is that the Commission should be to some extent – in the strict sense – irresponsible. That is, it should lead governments – or at any rate embarrass them into action – by suggesting policies large and radical in scope which some EEC capitals might be reluctant to accept, but which would have some doctrinal resonance over and above purely national interest. The socialists in the Commission now have a majority of one, including Jenkins (the others are Voel, Gundelach, Vredeling, Cheysson, Haferkamp and Giolitti), and it is hard not to be optimistic that over the coming months this fact will not have a bearing on the flavour of their policies.

As time goes by these alternatives will not be posed with their present clarity. There is a pause while each Commissioner dodges between his dossier and the drawing board. Certain refrains meanwhile are already evident. Jenkins doesn't want the Commission to be judged on its first year's work: he will map out a four-year programme. And – we have all heard this before, have we not? – he wants the Commission to have a 'human face' so that the man in the street might joyfully identify with the Commission and its works – as if such a chimera were remotely possible. How do people identify with a bureaucracy? They don't, and Jenkins of all people should know that.

More realistically, he has sorted out some other familiar themes. No clown with a proposal 'to harmonise the length of orange peel in marmalade', as one of Jenkins's staff put it, will be given any sympathy. Relations with the United States are to get priority attention. This week the EEC score-board on that subject reads Mondale United 2, Kissinger Rovers nil. Jenkins also wants the economic divergencies between the Nine reduced, if not eliminated. Just as well this, because it's here the seeds of the Community's destruction lie and are likely to flourish during a presidency which seeks the membership of Greece, and may have Spain thrust upon it.

Jean Quinze has made, or, strictly, is about to make, a good start. It's against a background of political uncertainty and deep economic anxiety. Eighteen months from now he may find he has one of the most highly paid yet unrewarding jobs in the world. Certainly he will have to fight, fight and fight again to save the Europe he loves. His chances are about evens.

Brussels

Gamini Seneviratne

Mrs Gandhi as Lady Bountiful

When India goes to the polls in March, the result may well be as everybody seems to predict (except, of course, former deputy Prime Minister and recent political prisoner Moraji Desai and his hastily formed patchwork party of many political materials): yet another sweeping victory for the National Congress and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. But will there be no surprises? Will the 320 million potential voters reveal nothing?

The trouble is that general elections are rarely decided on single issues. We shall probably never know for certain whether the Indian electorate approves of the state of emergency, the imprisonments and press censorship. It is impossible to test the feelings of this country of more than 600 million people with any degree of accuracy; but enough can be sensed in six weeks of extensive touring to guess that the great majority accept all the measures of the emergency, except the incarcerations.

Will sympathy for the prisoners (and ex-prisoners) win many votes? The chances are they will not. Desai and the new alliance of Opposition parties, the Janata Party, can hardly avoid playing up the emergency but, in doing so, they will almost inevitably do what many of Mrs Gandhi's critics have already done – give Congress more credit for recently noticed improvements than it deserves. The fact is, as was said of another place not long ago, India has never had it so good. And Congress can hardly conceal its delight when someone says it is all due to the harsh measures of the state of emergency.

The trade balance moved to surplus last February and has stayed there every month since. External reserves at the end of 1976 stood at the embarrassing, even dangerous, level of over 20 billion rupees which, following six revaluations of the rupee against sterling last year, is roughly £1,400m.

Meanwhile industrial production has been rising steadily – 10 per cent in 1976 – and though some of it is more apparent than real because of subsidies, tax holidays and the like, India is now beginning to emerge as an important industrial nation. Exports include railway rolling stock, textile plants, motor cars and parts to developing countries as well as to the US, Australia and Europe. Of the European Economic Community countries, West Germany is the biggest importer of Indian industrial products, though the total value is still a modest £7m.

But India has only just begun to exploit its resources. The Government has been slow to invest in mineral exploration. Instead it has opted to export iron ore, manganese ore and coal, and to channel some of the revenue on to a slow-but-steady exploration programme. The policy has come in for criticism both by those who say the country's non-renewable resources should be conserved, and by those who want an accelerated exploration programme.

Production of crude oil in India is expected to rise to a little over 14 million tons next year, when the current (fifth) development plan ends. This is still less than half India's needs. In fact the rising price, and therefore shortage, of oil has been a serious obstacle to development. Consumption has been deliberately held back since 1972, by various fiscal and other measures. The next five-year plan, designed to cover the period from 1978-84, will rely heavily on exploitation of the country's potential in oil and natural gas. But as demand increases for nitrogenous fertiliser and transport fuel, both essential for a predominantly rural economy like India's, this is undoubtedly the biggest problem the new government will have to tackle.

At the end of the day it will be the rural vote which will decide the election. On paper at least it is the reason why Mrs Gandhi can be confident of triumphing even if Congress loses all the urban seats in the 525-seat Lok Sabha. None of the Opposition parties, except the Communists who are not in the new coalition, have a measurable following in India's 750,000 villages; and the enforced absence of leaders can hardly have helped.

Congress, on the other hand, has been entrenched in the rural sector since before Independence. As the party in continuous power it has been able to maintain contact. Mrs Gandhi has inherited and retained the immense affection which the village people had for her father. Her Government has recently introduced rural programmes such as credit facilities and abolition of rural debt which can only increase that popularity.

The Prime Minister's detractors have been at some pains to point out that agricultural (mainly food) production has been at record levels recently, only because India has had favourable monsoons. In fact, following the disastrous drought of 1972 which affected the grain harvests of so many countries that it raised the spectre of global starvation, the monsoon rains, on average

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over the whole of India, have been too heavy in 1973/74, too irregular the following year and, last year, broke off abruptly.

The monsoons of the past three years were probably no more favourable than those which the Paddock brothers, Williams and Paul, used in their calculations for the book *Famine – 1975* which they published in the middle 1960s. In the famine-strategy prescribed by these two agricultural experts for the widespread food shortage in the developing world, which they themselves predicted, India was classed as 'beyond hope', to be left to its fate like a soldier too severely wounded to be worthy of limited medical help.

In fact 1975 was a surplus year, as was 1976. India now has a grain stock of some 20 million tons and an almost impossible problem of storage. The maximum storage capacity of the Food Corporation of India is 13 million tons, which includes 5 million tons in the open, protected under special polythene covers and requiring regular and expensive fumigation and aeration. A further 5 million tons are in private godowns hired by the FCI.

If fair weather contributed little to this situation, the state of emergency clearly did nothing. The surpluses did not occur by chance either; irrigation, better seed, new cropping patterns, fertilisers, pesticides and a variety of factors, some initiated more than 20 years ago, have brought it about.

Given this undeniably impressive record on the one hand, and an unprepared Opposition and a cowed press on the other, can anything rob Mrs Gandhi of a landslide victory in March? There is perhaps one issue which could still trip her up. Ironically it is symbolised by the one item in the development programme which the emergency was used to push, the item which the World Bank and the whole developed world has urged upon India for years. It is the family planning, or more accurately, the birth control programme.

There is little doubt that India needs to check its rate of population increase. On 1 January 1976, the total population was estimated to have passed the 600 million mark. At the rate of 2 per cent increase a year India was adding one million a month to its numbers or, as Minister of Health and Family Planning, Dr Karan Singh, put it, growing at the rate of one Australia every year. The Government's target is to reduce the growth rate to 1.4 per cent. Having relied on the so called 'cafeteria' approach – publicising and providing various contraceptives and methods designed to encourage conception by choice rather than by chance – for 22 years, India introduced a new National Population Policy last April, which relies on the once-for-all method of sterilisation almost to the exclusion of all other systems.

The official policy insists, and the Minister has issued repeated directives stressing, that sterilisation is not compulsory. Maharashtra alone has introduced new legislation to give itself powers to compel sterilisation, if necessary. In the meantime, however, most states have found they can use existing laws to push the programme along with great vigour.

For example, the Uttar Pradesh Government launched a drive to round-up and rehabilitate beggars in eight towns, under the Anti-Beggary Act. In the first swoop, 3,000 beggars were arrested and 2,300 were sterilised. To push the scheme along, practically all government employees, and a lot of others, have been pressed into service as motivators. They are expected to encourage 'eligible' couples (men under 55 years and women under 45) who have three children (four if the first three are of the same sex) to get themselves sterilised.

There are cash and other incentives for successful motivators, as well as for those who are sterilised and for the doctors performing the operation. There are daunting disincentives for motivators and medical teams who fail to maintain set quotas. There is little substantiated evidence, but a great number of rumours, about falsification of figures, forgeries of certificates, graft and harrassment of the public. Other ministeries, notably those of agriculture, education and health itself, have lodged reports which indicate that the implementation of the policy has caused fear and mistrust of all officialdom. This is particularly evident in rural areas where a stranger, particularly one travelling in a Jeep or other official-looking vehicle, will find whole villages deserted of menfolk.

Family Planning officials maintain an implacable cool when asked about alleged straying from policy. The Prime Minister herself, on the other hand, has allowed that in a massive programme such as this, 'there may be some misuse and some people might commit mistakes'. So far she has not suggested that the scheme itself may not be quite right. After March, it would be something if she could bring herself to admit even that much.

New Delhi

Patrick Wintour

Pressures on the Express

Totally revamped newspapers are a little like a major haircut. The shock of novelty is so overpowering that an immediate, unprejudiced judgment is impossible. But not even the most fashion-obsessed girl could have reflected and inquired for so long and so lavishly as did the *Daily Express* over its restyling. At the launch at the Inn on the Park the advertising agencies including the *Mail*'s Saatchi and Saatchi seemed impressed. The *Express*, for its part, has been predictably beating its breast in a way that reminds me of Paul Foot's remark that 'there is no more sickening sound than that of a bourgeois paper slapping itself on the back'. But the real telling yardstick for the Beaverbrook management and potential advertisers will be the next six months JICTAR ratings and particularly the development of the age profile of the *Express*'s readership. If the newly pitched 'Voice of Britain' lures the 16-25 age group without at the same time alienating too large a proportion of their ageing readership, then Jocelyn Stevens and Roy Wright, the editor, can be satisfied.

The game plan is to reach the people who are leaving home for the first time just when the ties of their parents' reading habits are loosed and before their own become cemented. If their product does not reach an identifiable middlebrow young market – gullible and responsive to advertiser's copy – then the rot will go on. According to advertisers, women are particularly impressionable and so desirable in any newspaper's profile. But age is the real problem. At the moment reading the *Daily Express* is literally the kiss of death – over 70,000 readers die a year. With a median reading age of 49 such natural wastage contributes heavily to the trend of losing 10 per cent of its readers every year. Charles Wintour, my father, in his book *Pressures on the Press* (written before the *Express* replaced the *Mail* as the sick man of Fleet Street) said: 'The health of a newspaper can best be judged by studying the proportion of young readers in the total readership.' He then went on to say that the *Mail* had the lowest proportion – 15 per cent; since then the *Sun* and *Mail* have both changed. The *Sun* now comes top of this league at 26 per cent and the Mail is now at 17 per cent, one below the national average. But the *Express* is lowest of all at 14 per cent. The picture is not so dark in absolute terms (the *Mail* sells overall 900,000 copies less and has even fewer young readers) but the long

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term indicators were too disturbing to ignore.

Going tabloid, despite the disastrous experience at the *Evening News*, was the *Express*'s last big card. But even so, avoiding miniaturising the existing *Express* proved difficult, and most of the crucial decisions had to be made in the last three weeks after the reorganisation of the top staff at Christmas. Considering that the decision to go tabloid had been made in principle a year earlier, the rush at the end is surprising. It was dictated by two considerations. First, Roy Wright was just settling in at the *Express*. The staff were not sure either of their new editor – or tabloids. Secondly, the *Standard* was moving to the *Express* building and the Ampress machines for tabloid proved troublesome for a while. Eventually it was the purchase of the Hughes story for £30,000 (the *Express* syndicators ludicrously sold some of it to their Scottish rivals) that clinched the argument.

Turning tabloid, it was realised, would generate its own publicity (over 800,000 extra copies were printed) so the £340,000 Collett, Dickenson, Pearce advertising campaign, with a film made by the director of *Bugsy Malone,* centred on Hughes. The ads were estimated to reach 85 per cent of the adult population and by starting the serial in the *Sunday Express*, it was hoped that some of the 5 million *Sunday Express* readers who do not read the *Daily Express* might be sufficiently hooked to try the sister daily paper. Whether Hughes is the right vehicle is dubious; it is no more inherently an anti-Establishment story than Mrs Tyler's problems with her bra. It is about a senile old man who happened to be very, very rich.

There is a stiffness about the new *Express* formula, a mechanistic transfer of market surveys on to the features pages. At its crudest and most amoral, the technique involved selecting the kind of news that would interest and sell to the kind of reader the advertisers want to influence. Catch those setting up at home (male median age 25, female 23) through a 'living together' pullout; the young are more interested in money than the old, so run a down-to-earth Saturday supplement; provide more space to the arts through a Friday weekend briefing; a third of 16-24 age group change employers once per year, so deal with job dissatisfaction; there are nearly half a million students in full-time higher education and 150,000 part-time, so select more news sympathetic to students, (at present the NUS Press Officer regards *Express* student coverage as a sick joke); Hickey writes too much of an elderly third-string aristocracy in comparison with Nigel Dempster and so on – it is almost like editing a paper by reading HMSO Social Trends. But anyone who equated youth with Leftist politics has not been reading the same surveys as the management. The immorality of an egalitarian society will still be preached, only in less bitter and grumpy tones.

Although the management may itself be agnostic about changes in the social climate, a proportion of *Express* journalists certainly are not. The possibility of them changing their copy is hard to credit, and somehow even when the young read it, they may still not 'believe it'. Beaverbrook always believed that papers must be run by the editor's instinct and not by questionnaires. It is heartening to see the *Express* management at last putting two well-manicured fingers up at the old man's ways; it is only a pity that it is not done with a little more conviction and a little less calculation.

Derek Humphry

Fuzzy Board

Complaints against the police by members of the public never stop rising. The 1975 total, recently made public (a year late), was 19,205, a big jump on the previous year and roughly double the total of ten years ago. The cause of the increase is not easy to assess but it probably lies somewhere between a heightened consciousness on the part of the public of their rights and the bad publicity certain corrupt policemen have been giving their service.

This year, with the novelty of the Police Complains Board, due to start work in May, complaints are expected to soar to 25,000. The Home Office hope that the volume thereafter will drop back. For its part, the Police Federation has announced that it intends to dampen any zeal for complaining against its members by sueing anyone who makes a malicious or reckless complaint.

Nobody expected the Police Act, 1976, which is a unique and reforming piece of legislation but not without flaws, to come into effect without problems. It is due to be fully reviewed after its first year. But the tragedy is that it seems doomed to go the way of the early Race Relations Acts in being administered by the wrong people.

The Community Relations Commission, set up in 1969 to promote racial harmony, almost foundered because its first chairman, Frank Cousins, understood it was a two-day-a-week job. It failed to attract an able staff and never recovered from a bad start. Eventually, Mark Bonham Carter had to leave the Race Relations Board, where he was full-time chairman, and where, within the limitations of a soft anti-discrimination Act he had at least made the Board seem credible, to try to reshape the Commission. This spring the Commission and the Board are to be merged under David Lane for yet another try.

Ignoring the lesson of Frank Cousins and the Commission, the Prime Minister has now appointed Lord Plowden to be chairman of the Police Complaints Board. It is a part-time appointment, for which he could have received some salary but he has declined payment. Lord Plowden celebrated his 70th birthday on the day Mr Callaghan confirmed his appointment. A man of many business interests, Lord Plowden has been chairman of Tube Investments since 1963. He has considerable experience as an inquirer on behalf of government, having chaired a probe into Treasury control of public expenditure in 1959, into the representational services overseas in 1963, into the aircraft industry in 1964 and into the structure of the electricity supply industry in 1974.

All a far cry from assessing whether P. Bloggs actually did call a man a 'black bastard' or if a neighbourhood is not getting adequate police protection. While his suitability to chair the Police Complaints Board in his spare time has so far eluded observers outside Whitehall, there was no mistaking how he saw his own role when he said: 'In 99.9 per cent of cases one would not expect to challenge the judgments reached by police investigations' (*The Times*, 6 January). Lord Plowden thought that police investigations into complaints were 'carried out in an exemplary way'. Why on earth bother then with a new Act of Parliament and an elaborate Police Complaints Board costing £300,000 a year?

This dismal beginning on the part of the chairman has hardly been alleviated by the naming of the first four of the nine commissioners to serve on the Complaints Board. Sir Frederick Hayday, who is 64, is also to be a part-timer. He was formerly national industrial officer of the Union of General and Municipal Workers, chairman of the TUC in 1962, and still sits on the British Rail Board. Drawing salaries of £7,500 a year as full time commissioners will be Sir George Ogden, aged 63, a former town clerk of Leicester and Manchester, and another knight, Sir James Waddell, a retired under-secretary of state at the Home Office. He is 62. Another whole-timer, and a good deal younger, is Mrs Rosemary Wolff, widow of Michael Wolff who was director-general of the Conservative Party. With the disappearance of her seat (part-time) on the Community Relations Commission she is compensated by a full-time transfer to the Complaints Board. According to the official literature, her qualification for seats on these bodies is listed as 'schools manager'.

The Home Office is still hunting for several more commissioners to serve on the Complaints Board. It is to be hoped that they will not necessarily be knights, white or in the last part of their lives. Unfortunately, the constitution of the Board so far has frightened off some candidates.

All of which indicates that the Police Complaints Board will have only the slightest impact on the problem, because the people in charge of policy are either too old to be in tune with the real problems at the grassroots, have spent a life-time in government service and consequently think 'officially', or are merely amateurs chosen for their liberal sentiments and good connections in the Establishment.

Lord Plowden's remarks so far have done everything to assure the police that they have nothing to fear from the scrutinies of the Board. The Association of Police Superintendents underlined this by announcing that it felt the appointments were satisfactory.

Meanwhile the public, long dissatisfied with the police being investigators and judges of their own malefactors, and fed-up with the eternal whitewashing of dubious actions after flimsy inquiries, gets no reassurance that its interests are being well protected, and the whole procedure starts without any confidence whatsoever in the independence of the Complaints Board.

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Peter Jenkins

The Limits of Jimmy Carter

Myths abound about the man who last week was sworn in as 39th President of the United States. One is that he appeared on the scene unknown and enters the White House an enigma still. In fact Jimmy Carter was quite a famous figure. Elected Governor of Georgia in 1970, his portrait appeared on the cover of the 31 May issue of *Time* magazine in 1971. The cover story was about the 'New South' (a phrase first used by Henry Grady in 1872) and was titled 'Dixie Whistles a Different Tune'. It focussed on Carter in Georgia because, according to media lore, he was the prettiest of a crop of 'New South' governors which included Reuben Askew of Florida, Dale Bumpers of Arkansas, John West of South Carolina and Linwood Holton of Virginia. The artist who did the 1971 portrait has since said that he was instructed to make Carter look as much as possible like Kennedy. Indeed it does resemble John Kennedy although there was no reason why it should not as Carter's resemblance to the Kennedys was well-remarked, the subject of a good deal of press comment as well as campaign jibes, during his 1970 run for the governorship of Georgia.

Time also projected him, again with every journalistic justification, as the most interesting of the new governors on the strength of his Kennedy-style inaugural address. Carter had said: 'I say to you quite frankly that the time for racial discrimination is over . . . No poor, rural or black person should ever have to bear the additional burden of being deprived of the opportunity of an education, a job or simple justice . . . As Governor, I will never shirk this responsibility.'

Carter thus was an obvious choice of focus for a foreign correspondent on a visit to the South in the autumn of 1972. I spent about an hour with him in the Governor's Mansion, Atlanta, and liked him. I made a few notes but didn't use my taperecorder and subsequently I lost the notebook on a Delta flight. The notes might have been of some interest today but not, I think, of any great consequence; I hadn't been looking for quotes and least of all considering him as a future presidential candidate, although it was at about that time, or so it is now said, that he was setting his mind on the White House.

We chatted mostly, as I recall, about Georgia and the South. A theme was the efficiency of his government. He wasn't at all like 'southern politicians' in the stereotype – he didn't drink bourbon or chew at cigars – more like a senior Coca-Cola executive; he was evidently proud of his record but he wasn't at all boastful. The war came up because I remember him saying that more Georgia boys had died in Vietnam than from any other state; I don't remember him as a critic of the Nixon-Kissinger policy which was, purportedly, exit via 'Vietnamisation'. Our conversation took place a few weeks before Kissinger's 'peace is at hand' statement.

Carter lived up to his image as a progressive governor, certainly by the standards of the South; he seemed to me to go with the new Atlanta, the only other American city I know with that special vibrant feel of New York about it; certainly he didn't strike me as a rural Georgian out of place in the big-bad city. What struck me most of all was the calibre of his staff. I was impressed, for example, that he should have a trained psychologist, Peter Bourne, as a close aide, advising him on school programmes for deprived children. That wasn't the sort of thing I expected to find even in the 'New South'. George Wallace, after all, had a spittoon on his plane and would show off his prowess to reporters.

A few days later I encountered Carter again. This time he was participating in the Conference of Southern Governors, a junket on a late-Roman Empire scale, on the ultra-luxurious Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. The governors conferred for a few hours in the mornings; in the afternoons they played golf or lounged around the pool-sides; at night there were parties and goodness knows what else. Nineteen governors (plus Spiro Agnew as guest of honour) had somehow or other amassed a following of some 5-600 – aides, lobbyists, salesmen and hangers-on, accompanied by wives or other ladies – and there was food and drink enough for all and many, many more. At one banquet there was a choice of two dishes from each of the 19 states represented. I remember especially the Mississippi wild rabbit.

One hot afternoon, as I reported to the *Guardian*: 'It was Governor Jimmy Carter of Georgia who took time off from the golf-course to spend a couple of hours in Beaufort and Jasper counties looking at a pilot comprehensive health service programme which the Poverty Programme has sponsored there. One of Carter's aides, Peter Bourne, said "You know the money they are spending at that conference in four days would probably pay the operating costs of this programme for two or three years".' The report went on to describe the shocking poverty in those two South Carolina counties, among the most abject in the United States. Indeed, Beaufort County had been brought to national attention a year or so earlier when a doctor claimed that people were dying from starvation there. The report continued: 'A doctor working in one of the new clinics estimated that 75 per cent of his patients suffered from malnutrition and 25 per cent were serious cases. Their chief ailments were worms, anaemia, parasites and hypertension. Worms got into the children's feet as they walked in excrement, babies got them from the contaminated bathwater.'

My report of Carter's concern – alone among the assembled governors – with the plight of these dreadfully poor black people was scorned later on by a *Washington Post* writer who happened to see the story. If I had known anything about American politics, he said, I would have realised that Carter was simply politicking; what could be more obvious than a flesh-pressing southern politician getting himself on television back home by helicoptering over from Hilton Head for an hour with the poor? He was more right than he knew about Carter politicking – he was running for President of the United States – but I am still sure that he was wrong if he thought Carter was simply politicking and didn't care about the Beaufort and Jasper County people. You can usually tell when a man does care.

Doubts of this kind concerning Carter's sincerity have pursued him every yard of his way to the White House. There is plenty of room for doubt about the man as he embarks upon his presidency, but in my own case I started with a favourable feel for him and I am sticking to it for a while yet. People who knew Carter in the South or who first glimpsed him being himself in his own native political environment have tended to form more favourable judgments about him than people who saw him for the first time saying 'I'm Jimmy Carter . . .' north of the Mason-Dixon line.* For a better understanding of him we must begin again in the South.

After my conversation with Carter in Atlanta I remember gazing at a life-size statue of Thomas Watson, William Jennings Bryan's running mate in 1866, which stands, I think, outside the main entrance to the State House. In an interview with Walter Cronkite on CBS during the Democratic Party Convention in New York last July Carter's mother, 'Miss Lillian', recalled how her father (Jim Jack Gordy) had been a follower of Tom Watson and had subscribed to his news letter. She didn't say exactly when this was but she said it as if she remembered her father as something of a radical. Watson, in fact, during the first decade of the century became an increasingly unpleasant bigot. As his biographer, C. Vann Woodward, puts it 'When Watson soured he went the whole way'. There is no evidence that Watson played a direct part in the relaunching of the Klan (on a hill outside Atlanta on the eve of Thanks-

*Hunter Thompson for example. See *Rolling Stone*, June 1976 for an account of Thompson's revelatory experience, almost a 'second birth', while listening to Carter's Law Day speech at Athens, Georgia, 4 May, 1974. Thompson had drunk the best part of a quart of Wild Turkey by the time he heard the speech, which has since become a standard text for illustrating the populist side of Carter.

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giving Day 1915) but, quoting Woodward again, 'if any mortal man may be credited . . . with releasing the forces of human malice and ignorance and prejudice, which the clan merely mobilised, that man was Thomas E. Watson'. Watson, however, had begun as a sturdy agrarian rebel – he was a biographer of Jefferson, Jackson and Napoleon – and even when launching his foul diatribes against blacks, Jews and Catholics he continued to lash out at Wall Street, the city bankers and the big farmers; shortly before his death he became a champion of recognising the new Soviet Union and he was eulogised by Eugene Debs, the American socialist leader, as 'a great man, a heroic soul'.

Populist Inspiration

Carter's acceptance speech at the Madison Square Garden contained this populistic passage: 'Too many have had to suffer at the hands of a political and economic elite who have shaped decisions and never had to account for mistakes nor to suffer from injustice. When unemployment prevails, they never stand in line looking for a job. When deprivation results from a confused and bewildering welfare system, they never do without food, or clothing, or a place to sleep'. And so on.* Later he told somebody that the acceptance speech had been partly inspired by populism – an admission which, as Woodward himself pointed out (*New York Review of Books* 28 October 1976), meant 'his fate was sealed with those in whose mind the prevailing stereotype was fixed'. Woodward was referring to the classification of the populist movement, especially in the South, as belonging to the 'radical Right', a tradition verging upon a native fascism. Folk memories are sensitive and liberal-minded Catholics and Jews recalled that the blacks were not the only victims of the Klansmen. More recently the McCarthyite inquisition of the liberal Left had been placed by some commentators in the same 'radical Right' or populist tradition. But although it did degenerate into bigotry and xenophobia the populists themselves, particularly in the South, remained part also of a genuinely radical tradition. Southern populism in the Nineties was a movement for economic reform, an expression of frustration at agrarian displacement, a revolt of the 'outsider' against the prevailing Establishment.

To call Carter a populist, or to link a part of him with that tradition, is no more to present him as an agrarian radical in the 1890s mould than to accuse him of racism, anti-semitism or xenophobia. Nor does it help in the least to place him in any conventional Left-Right, ideological spectrum which might fit the politics of, say, New York City. Indeed it is only helpful to use the word populist at all if it conveys a distinctive political manner or style, rooted in the politics of country against city and of small against big, expressive of a frustration which transcends mere divisions of wealth and status, a combination of attitudes which might seem incongruous to urban political sophisticates but which makes more sense to ordinary people the more it seems to cut across party lines.

With Jimmy Carter in the White House we have the benefit of hindsight but neither his successes first in the primaries and then – but oh so narrowly! – in the general election, nor the man himself, remain such great mysteries after some inquiry into his political career in Georgia. Three southern political scientists were on to the point early enough and wrote (in 1971) an analysis of some of the latest gubernatorial campaigns (including Carter's) which concluded:

'You'll regret this when nobody shows up for the next war.'

> If such a populism becomes a recognisable phenomenom, let us suggest that it will *not* be expressed in terms of sets of distinct issue positions – distinct in the sense of being recognisably 'populist'. Instead it might be more accurately seen as a style of political conflict, a mood or a stance, characterised by 'average man' rhetoric, and by a high level of cynicism about the system and those who hold powerful positions in it. (*Clotfeller, Hamilton & Hawkins in New South 26 No 1 Winter 1971.*)

A question of huge interest and importance in the South at that time was whether Democrats, such as Carter with his populist tinge, who in gubernatorial races had managed to bring a substantial slice of the Wallace vote back into the ranks of the regular party, could do the same on behalf of a Democratic presidential candidate in the South in 1972. If they could, Nixon's southern strategy – which had produced meagre results in the 1970 mid-term elections – was a dead duck and Nixon, who had owed his 1968 victory to the third-party intervention of George Wallace, would be a goner in 1972. In a book published in 1971 the editors of the *Atlanta Constitution* reported:

> Carter's own vision of his campaign suggested this possibility. Carter argued, privately, again and again, that many white segregationist-leaning Wallace supporters reacted actually as much from a sense of frustration as from continued racism. Much of this frustration stemmed from the feeling of being pushed around by the federal government, which of course involved racial matters like school desegregation, said Carter. But, he cotended, this sense of alienation. from government had come to have a separate life of its own, part of the attitude of many white citizens who, for example, had reconciled themselves to school integration. Carter believed that he could successfully bring such people back into a sense of participation, a relationship to government, without any reference to segregation or racism in any form.*

This passage is of great interest on two scores: it contains an early statement of the approach Carter brought successfully to presidential politics in 1976 and it goes some way to explaining his 1970 campaign for the governership from which his enemies drew some ammunition during last year's battle for the Democratic nomination. In his unsuccessful 1966 run for the governorship Carter was perceived to be liberal, at least by Georgia standards. In 1970 in a messy multi-cornered primary contest Carter knew he could only win with the aid of Wallace voters. He denounced his opponent, former Governor Carl Sanders, as the Establishment candidate, threw rural Georgia against Atlanta and the cities, built his strongest base in the rural south of the state – the stronghold in turn of Tom Watson, the Talmadges, and Lester Maddox, the latter a last-ditch segregationist who became Carter's 1970 running mate. Carter made no overtly racist statements but he did win a decisive proportion of the Wallace vote. He described himself as 'the only true conservative' in the primary. In the code language of the South 'conservative' can be taken to mean 'segregationist', 'liberal' to imply 'nigger lover'. He also announced on one occasion that he was 'basically a redneck'. At a fund-raising dinner in Columbus on 26 October 1970 he declared: 'Lester Maddox represents the essence of the Democratic Party. He has compassion for the ordinary man. I am proud to be on the ticket with him.'

How to Win

These and other statements and associations were dredged up and slung at Carter last year. Evidently they did him no harm with the black electorate which was decisive in making him both candidate and President. Black Atlanta Congressman Andy Young claimed that Carter was 'one of the finest products of the most misunderstood region of our nation'. But there hadn't

*Much of the Law Day speech at Athens, 4 May 1974 was in similar vein, for example his definition of a consent warrant: 'That's when two policemen go to a house. One of them goes to the front door and knocks on it and the other one runs round to the backdoor and yells "come in".' Carter frequently raided this speech for campaign material. A somewhat clumsy observation about the prison population became on the stump: 'When I was governor of Georgia I visited all the prisons. I have seen young people in prison. I have seen black people in prison. Very intelligent people in prison. But I have never seen a rich person in prison.'

**The Southern Strategy* by Reg Murphy and Hal Gulliver, New York 1971. Murphy's testimony is especially valuable as by 1976 he had become a hostile witness to Carter's career in Georgia, especially his 1970 primary campaign against Carl Sanders.

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been much misunderstanding in Georgia in 1970. Carter had merely understood that the only way to win power in American politics is to put together alliances of conflicting groups. Of course he wasn't a racist; his 1971 Inaugural proved it and made history but even before it was delivered a leading black politician, who had backed Sanders in the primary, said: 'He is going to be one of the greatest governors this state has ever had. I served with him in the Senate, you know. I knew he wasn't a racist then. And I know now that he is going to do more for blacks than any governor has ever done. We'll have some black judges appointed by Jimmy Carter. Just wait and see . . . He has the genuine desire to right a lot of wrongs . . . I understand why he ran that kind of ultra-conservative campaign . . . you have to do that to win. And that's the main thing. I don't believe you can win in this state without being a racist. Five years from now perhaps – but not now.'

Outsider Role

Georgian politics are no soft ball game. In an earlier campaign Carter had been the victim of ballot-stuffing. His successful fight against Sanders, who had started out strong favourite, may not have been wholly edifying .but it laid the basis for Carter's future success in a number of ways: it was a lesson is playing the 'outsider' role, it was a proving ground for a new kind of populist style and it showed that the supporters of George Wallace were not irrevocably lost to the Democratic coalition.

Carter, or someone like him, had been a longtime a-coming in American politics. Barry Goldwater in 1964, George Wallace and Eugene McCarthy in 1968 and George McGovern in 1972 were his precursors, not in that they held similar ideological positions but in that each was an 'outsider' attempting to scale the walls of the presidential citadel. We mustn't overdo fitting the fact of Carter to the fashionable theory of American politics, although Carter might have been invented by Professor Walter Dean Burnham of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a leading exponent of the theory of party 'decomposition' and what is called the 'individuation' of the electoral process. Over the last quarter of a century there has been a decline in partisanship which gathered speed rapidly in the late Sixties when new issues – war, race and Watergate – cut across party allegiances and alienated voters from the political system including the political parties. One measure of this was the number of voters registering neither as Democrats nor Republicans but as Independents who by 1972 had become the largest 'party' – 38 per cent of voters in 1974.

No wonder by mid-summer Burnham was hailing Carter as the candidate at last arrived who knew how to 'tap this mass disaffection'. As a Southerner, practised in the politics of candidate or issue-based factions, Carter was especially equipped to take advantage of the 'decomposition' of the Democratic Party and seize the nomination in the same sort of way that McGovern did in 1972 and McCarthy nearly did in 1968. Certainly he owed nothing to the party Establishment. Averell Harriman on hearing of his up-and-coming candidacy asked: 'How can he be nominated? I don't know him and neither do any of my friends.' Unlike McCarthy and McGovern he was not a single-issue candidate, at least he had no single issue comparable to war in Vietnam. If there was an issue overriding all others in 1976 it was 'the issue of moral leadership in government'. This was the chief conclusion, according to pollster Daniel Yankelovitch, of the surveys conducted by the Public Agenda Foundation. The commercial

'Already?'

pollsters were identifying the same phenomenon including Carter's own man, Pat Cadell, who had sold McGovern on his 'alienation thesis' four years before its time. The national issue in election year 1976 was the one Carter had identified in Georgia in 1970 – how to bring the frustrated and the alienated back into participation, back into a relationship with government.

Nothing, therefore, could be more misleading for the purposes both of understanding Carter's victory or anticipating the character of his presidency than to think of him as the restorer of the old 'Roosevelt coalition'. This was the alliance upon which the Democratic Party until 1952 rested its claim to be the party of government. It was not the coalition which first elected Roosevelt but the one which reelected him three times and Truman once. There is a better analogy, if you wish, between Carter's winning coalition last year and the forces which secured Roosevelt, first the nomination of his party and then elected him against a do-nothing president. Each owed his victory to the South. What came to be known as the Roosevelt coalition was constructed in office; as the white South deserted him he consolidated and extended his support among the urban proletariat (increasingly organised during his administrations, although the unions were not much of a political force until 1944), the farmers, and later the blacks – although few had voting rights in the South. With the exception of the blacks Carter did not do very well among most of the elements of the Roosevelt coalition, save organised labour, and how much that was to do with union clout is doubtful. Without the blacks he could not have won either nomination or election, not even in the South where Ford won 55 per cent of the white vote. Without the blacks Carter would have carried only Arkansas, Tennessee and his own Georgia. Nationally, too, Ford won the election among whites (51.3 per cent to 47.6) but Carter's virtual monopoly of the 6.6 million black votes cast (estimates range from 82 to 92 per cent) won him the White House. The black turn-out was marginally up, as it is each election (from 41 per cent to 43 per cent of eligible voters) but the national turnout was down from even Nixon's foregone landslide year – from 55.4 per cent of eligible voters to 53.3. It was even more down in the industrialised states because the aggregate poll increased in the South, presumably for reasons of regional pride. So much for the theory of the regeneration of American democracy through Carter's candidacy. A victory of this shape, and on this limited scale, necessarily meant that he had lost ground among key elements of the Roosevelt coalition, notably the Irish, Italians and East Europeans. However he did better than past Democrats among the professional and managerial classes and among white-collar workers. But comparing his results with Ford's rather than with previous Democrats', the key features of his success are (1) carrying the whole South save Virginia (2) running the incumbent close among registered 'Independents' (48-51 per cent compared with average scores since 1952 of 61 per cent Republican and 38 per cent Democrat) and (3) losing the entire West and chunks of the Mid-West.

Conservative Electorate

The meaning of these results is two-fold and important. They give us a better prognosis for the Carter presidency than any essays in amateur psychology. That is especially so if we set the meaning of the election results against what we have learnt about Carter's background and record as a politician and governor in Georgia. The results tell us that Carter is a president without a stable and viable coalition. He is a president elected by a temporary coalition which, save for the blacks, is of a conservative tendency. It will be the more easily enlarged in a conservative direction. Carter likes to win. He wrote in his campaign autobiography 'You show me a good loser and I will show you a loser.' Because he will want to win in 1980 he will be out to build himself while in power, as Roosevelt did, a viable coalition in the country. That doesn't mean he has to be a cynical, politicking president. Not at all. His commitment to black America will not be shaken easily. He discharged it while Governor of Georgia. (Moreover, honour – including telling the truth – does still have meaning in the South, the cynicism of Northerners notwithstanding*.) We can expect an embrasive style of presidential politics but that doesn't have to be gimmicky or Southern-sentimen-

*The American press, which forgot its Jeffersonian responsibilities in Election Year '76 in a flush of enthusiasm for what it imagined to be its detective's role during Watergate, did its best to rake all of the candidates into the muck. The attitude of the travelling press ('the boys on the bus') towards Carter seemed to be: Carter says 'I will not tell a lie.' All politicians are liars. *Ergo*, Carter is the biggest liar of them all.

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tal. As W. J. Cash, the best of all writers about the South, observed 'the Southerner's native tendency is to render all his impulses in terms of the highest purposes'. But what are Carter's impulses? Efficiency seems to be one strong one. Governmental efficiency 'rendered in terms of the highest purposes' might not be such a bad formula for governing for a President whose prime task it is to enlarge a conservative-tending constituency while producing actual results for the black and poor supporters who have placed their faith in him.

Problems such as urban decay and the squandering of energy resources may defy Carter's somewhat simple-sounding approach as a God-fearing problem-solver. But the criticism that he has promised too much and given another twist to unfounded expectations is, in my opinion, false. During last year's campaign both he and Ford were competing for an essentially conservative constituency – the centre moved somewhat to the 'Right'. The national mood as profiled in opinion research polls was a chastened one, more realistic and grown conscious of limits; it was not at all the sort of mood which makes possible a 'New Frontier' or a 'Hundred Days'. Carter became President, although in the end only just, because he best reflected the modest aspirations of the people. Ford represented a conservatism in the interest of the haves, Carter also a conservativism but one aware of ordinary frustrations about the seemingly-uncontrollable excesses or shortcomings of government; a conservatism tinged, as we have seen, by an older populist hue. One passage in his inaugural address stands out as true to the whole spirit of his campaign. 'We have learned,' he said, 'that "more" is not necessarily "better"; that even our great nation has its recognised limits, and that we can neither answer all questions nor solve all problems'. That is not the politics of promise, it is the politics of limits.

Peter Wilby

Science for All

The swing from science is over. It peaked in 1968, the year of the alarming Dainton Report, whose statistics suggested that, if the swing were maintained, the country would have no science students at all by the end of the century. By 1974 the number of boys passing O level physics and chemistry had increased by over 20 per cent, the number of girls by over 40 per cent, while passes in all subjects increased by only 10 per cent. There was a similarly dramatic success story at CSE level.

But it looks as if the schools are still failing to generate much enthusiasm for the physical sciences. The A level passes have been rising far more slowly. Between 1970 and 1974, applications for university chemistry courses fell by 40 per cent and have only just started, very gradually, to pick up. Some of the O level and CSE increase may be attributable to fewer schools allowing pupils to drop science entirely at 14. Though the incomplete results of a government survey suggest that only 6 per cent of boys and 17 per cent of girls have dropped science entirely by the fifth year of secondary school, they indicate that less than half take more than one science subject. Many students take A level physics and chemistry, merely so that they can qualify for oversubscribed university medical courses.

What has gone wrong? This ought to be a golden age for science education. The curriculum has changed out of all recognition since 1962. Superfluous subject matter (what Dainton called 'historical accretions') has been ejected from the syllabuses, practical work has been increased, modern science, such as the structure of the atom and radioactivity, has been introduced. The discovery approach associated with the Nuffield science schemes, which tries to give a sense of how scientists set about their work, has not only resulted in special O level syllabuses (taken by about one in five pupils) but has heavily influenced the traditional syllabuses. As Norman Booth, the government's chief schools inspector for science, has written in a paper for Shirley Williams (his contribution to 'the great debate') more money and time has probably been spent on renewing the science curriculum than on any other school subject.

The chief problem apparently is that most children find school science too difficult. That isn't surprising, since science, like foreign languages, used to be confined to the grammar schools. And even there, according to John Spice, chairman of the Schools Council science committee and a former Winchester master, it only clicked with about half the children. If anything, Nuffield has made things worse. In the old formulae-crammed syllabuses, the duller pupil could get by on memory; now, he has to understand it all. There is sound evidence that, throughout secondary schools, children are encountering scientific abstractions that are far beyond the grasp of the great majority of their age-group. The syllabuses are still overcrowded with high-level academic science.

The traditionalists, of course, will remark that all this is an elaborate way of saying that standards must fall. And so, in one sense, perhaps they must. Maybe some bright pupils will leave school at 18 with less scientific knowledge than they have now. There are several answers to the cries of horror that are bound to greet such a proposition. First, if we want to increase the pool of scientific and technological talent available to the community and to diffuse scientific understanding more widely, that is possibly the price we shall have to pay. Until we grapple with that kind of issue, most school curriculum problems will remain unresolved. Second, what law, of man or nature, states that 18-year-olds must embark on university courses with the amount of knowledge implied in existing syllabuses? Why not 50 per cent less – or 50 per cent more, for that matter? As John Spice points out, no modern science degree can hope to be anything like comprehensive. It's bound to be selective and what counts is the student's understanding and maturity, not his knowledge. Third, how much of what is 'covered' at school is retained in any case? Any science teacher can tell you that, even in a bright class, half the children have forgotten by the next lesson what the previous one was about.

So, at least for the first three years of secondary school (and perhaps for five years), there should be a common science curriculum taught in mixed ability classes. Norman Booth thinks that we could have a national core curriculum and that we could test it. What should be its aims? First, it should be concerned far more than most present syllabuses with the practical applications of science – the approach, if you like, should be deductive rather than inductive. Project work – children making things together through applying scientific principles – should be an integral part of the course, not be an optional extra.

Second, the new curriculum should try to transmit scientific habits, rather than just scientific knowledge. The Department of Education's Inspectorate has now listed eight criteria of this sort for good science teaching. They include: Is the pupil observant? Does he select from his observations? Does he look for patterns in what he observes? Does he seek to explain them? Can he devise experiments which will test his explanations? An overcrowded, over-academic syllabus frequently means that the teacher tells the child what to observe and devises his experiments for him. Third, schools should try to meet not only the needs of future adults, but the needs of children. Health is the obvious example.

It would be as well to give the primary schools some role in the science core curriculum. Current primary science teaching is sparse and haphazard. In a recent Schools Council study of primary education aims, the teachers put science 62nd in a list of 72 – below, for example, knowledge of the Bible and Christian belief, 'precise and economic body control' and games.

A primary curriculum would ensure that secondary science teachers had some idea of what to expect from their pupils. It would also see to it that primary teachers, most of whom have had little scientific training, did not try to over-reach themselves. But, above all, it would try to stimulate and retain the child's interest in science. Science is peculiarly a subject in which interest is aroused at an early age. If the child isn't enthusiastic about it by 13, it is very unlikely that he ever will be. Yet even the secondary schools aren't doing their best for the younger children. The 11- and 12-year-olds are least likely to encounter committed, enthusiastic, knowledgeable science teachers, least likely to be given adequate time for science lessons, least likely to get opportunities for practical work when there is a shortage of laboratories and equipment. Secondary education for all is failing if it does not include science for all.

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Michael Harloe*

The Attack on Housing

The past year was a bad one for the social services but arguably worse for some than others. In particular, the strong emphasis which the Government placed on increasing housing output and expenditure up to the end of 1975 has been decisively reversed. Chancellor Healey's recent Christmas present completed the process by which public spending on housing will, in real terms, be scarcely, if at all, above its 1973/4 level. It's worth remembering that, on entering office, Labour faced a collapsing house building programme; small wonder, then, that recent levels of house building and improvement activity suggest that we shall soon be back to the grim conditions that existed at the end of the Heath years.

To date the Government has no concerted plan for dealing with this collapse of its expansionist strategy. The housing cuts which have been imposed take a bewildering variety of forms, seemingly based on ad hockery and political expediency. However, the long awaited and still forthcoming official review of housing policy, will, when it appears, show whether Peter Shore has been able to put together a coherent alternative which preserves any semblance of progressive intent. He has certainly had no shortage of advice in the past months, most of it coming from those on the Right who wish to see further savage cuts.

The choice Shore faces is deceptively simple. Within the total public allocation for housing, which at the very best is unlikely to increase in the next few years, there are two main elements – subsidies to individuals to reduce their housing costs and subsidies to public and private agencies to build and improve more housing units. Inflation has enormously increased the cost of doing both these things and two important consequences have followed. The impressive increase which did occur in public expenditure in 1974/5 was largely swallowed up by rising prices and interest rates, and investment has been squeezed in order to maintain subsidies. The general reasons for this latter development are clear; reductions in individual subsidy are directly felt and politically damaging whereas cuts in new investment have a less direct and immediate effect, especially if they mainly fall on the poor and non-vocal in society. Some of Shore's unofficial advisers recognise that, left unchecked, present tendencies will result in a continued disintegration of programmes of new building and improvement. Apart from the social consequences of this, e.g. that the number of homeless has doubled in the last five years, the resultant unemployment and bankruptcy could shatter the already fragile construction industry for a generation. Many on the Left call, increasingly in vain, for more public expenditure to maintain and increase subsidies *and* investment. More practical politicians are advocating further reductions of subsidy from a variety of motives (some simply in order to maintain housing production – including, it seems, Reg Freeson in a recent speech).

However, such a decision opens up a political minefield. Almost everyone benefits, at one time or another, from housing subsidies – either by paying lower rents on their council houses or by tax relief on mortgages – and there are few votes in favour of their reduction. So who will lose out? The battlelines that have been drawn so far show that the heavy battalions are on the side of the owner-occupier and that the council tenant is the target. Margaret Thatcher, Peter Jay, the Bow Group and the Building Societies Association, to name but a few, advocate cutting subsidies and raising council rents, selling council houses and providing further incentives to owner-occupation, for example by reducing initial mortgage repayments, giving discounts on council sales and promoting part-purchase or 'shared equity' schemes. Even Frank Field appears to believe that the poor would best be helped if they had to buy their houses and, according to the *Daily Telegraph*, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury feels that council subsidies are too high and that the pattern of government housing expenditure should reflect the strong preference for home ownership over renting that exists.

Of course, the last direct attempt to tackle the problem of housing expenditure by an attack on council tenants led to the political débâcle of the 1972 Housing Finance Act, one of the most deeply unpopular measures of the last Tory government. But this time the approach is more subtle, and the victim is being softened up before his dispatch. Bogus arguments and specious appeals proliferate – all trying to show that public housing is not needed, is ruinously expensive and is inefficiently provided. The Nationwide Building Society and the *Guardian*, an oddly assorted pair, both suggest that we build more houses than we need. They base this conclusion on the fact that there are now more houses in Britain than households. They fail to remember that, if allowance is made for temporary vacancies, those doubling up with friends and relatives, obsolete stock and second homes, there is still an overall shortage of between 400,000 and 1 million houses – a fact which the million or more people now on council waiting lists serve to underline.

The huge rise in council house subsidies is also viewed with horror as tenants were, it is said, being feather-bedded. Yet public council-housing rents have increased faster than retail prices through much of the 1970s and most of the additional subsidies have been needed to pay for rising interest rates on council borrowing. Of course this seems far more terrible when a strange silence is maintained over the similar escalation of the tax relief subsidy to owner-occupiers in the same period – but then they are only following the Nelson-like stance of the Treasury which, staring strongly out of its blind eye, refuses to admit that a tax foregone is equivalent to a subsidy. Recent publicity has also attempted to prove that new public housing is too expensive and not even needed in London, where the bulk of the nation's housing stress exists. A confidential DoE report, leaked to the *Sunday Times* and others, played an elaborate statistical game with a series of dubious assumptions to 'prove' that the capital's fall in population could be housed in the existing, if improved, stock. (Alas, no reasonably conscientious statistician could be found to endorse this conclusion.) The report also managed to show that public housing costs far more in London than elsewhere, implying inefficiency, but ignoring the fact that the extra costs largely flowed from the consequence of high land and housing prices in the private sector.

Yet if people are to be told that council housing is bad for them, the shades of 1972 will warn any politician that some alternative future must be offered. Owner-occupation for (almost) all, on easy terms, is the answer. Indeed the promised land is almost in sight for GLC tenants if Tory GLC leader Horace Cutler and his party win in London in May. He will have, as he declared to the Conservative annual conference at Brighton last October, 'the sale of the century', as GLC tenants are offered their houses at knock-down prices. Of course the Tories have done this before in the late 1960s when they last held the big cities, and recent studies in Birmingham show that only relatively few tenants then were able or willing to buy and that those who did chose the better properties, houses not flats, leaving the public sector the poorer. The new Tory policy on housing would offer all council tenants the right to buy after three years' occupation. If this was taken up on any scale public housing would be reduced to a residual category for the very poor, the old, and the physically, mentally or socially handicapped. The horror of the American public housing

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Third World Books

Political, historical, cultural, economic, sociological, anthropological – books on all these aspects of emerging countries are authoritatively reviewed this week in The Times Educational Supplement.

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ghettos would not be long in arriving.

Moreover the long term result of such a move, whatever its short-term value as a political gesture to budget-cutting, would be to *increase* public subsidies. Council borrowing for housing only increases as more new building and improvement is carried out. However, owner-occupiers change their homes on average every seven years. Usually when they do so a new mortgage and tax relief is obtained by the subsequent home-owner based on the current market price of the house. As house prices increase, so does the amount of tax foregone by the Treasury. Furthermore this subsidy is greatest in the early years of a mortgage, so the owner who sells up after a few years only to start a fresh mortgage elsewhere is getting a particularly good deal. In the public sector, if all building and improvement were to cease, subsidies would decline very quickly over time. In the same circumstances in the private sector, subsidies would continue to increase. If these facts are candidly recognised, those current attempts to promote owner-occupation (including its 'extension' to marginal buyers by special mortgages or 'shared equity') which are based on the claim that such developments will save the Government money or enable more to be made available for investment, can be seen to be bogus. In reality such policies would continue heavily to subsidise housing consumption by owner-occupiers. Meanwhile public housing – the only way of producing decent shelter for the million or more on the waiting lists, effectively, efficiently and still, in the long run, cheaply – would be destroyed.

Those who doubt this might care to reflect on the conclusion of an official report by a foreign government on a recent attempt in their country to extend owner-occupation to people who would normally need to rent. On top of the usual tax relief, marginal owner-occupiers received additional government money to bring the interest rate on their 100 per cent home loans down to as low as 1 per cent. The report concluded that much of this handout merely served to increase demand faster than supply and inflate prices, so that owner-occupation was again whisked out of reach. Moreover those few who did manage to buy were so overburdened by their debts that, lacking any stake in their properties, they abandoned them in their thousands as the inflationary recession of the early 1970s hit prices and employment. Whole housing schemes became derelict in the process. The government concerned drew the only sane conclusion – that there was a substantial and continuing need for more subsidised rental housing. This message would scarcely please many of those who are offering their free advice to Mr Shore at present (let alone, it is to be feared, some of his colleagues in the Labour Party). Yet it was not the official view of a left-wing administration in some obscure and poor corner of the world, it was the view of President Nixon announced to Congress in 1973. It remains to be seen whether this country will need to learn the same lesson the same hard way; present indications are not hopeful.

Labour Weekly
THIS FRIDAY 10p.
Derek Senior
A CURE FOR THE N·H·S
Gets to the heart of matters that matter.

Tanna de Zulueta

The Third Sack of Rome

Before the Italian municipal elections last June Cardinal Poletti, Vicar of Rome, spoke of the 'suffering of the Holy Father' at the mere possibility of a communist mayor in the 'Holy City' of Rome. As it turned out, despite the fact that the art historian Giulio Argan was elected at the head of a communist-backed ticket, the Holy Father's apprehensions were groundless. To reassure him on this point Professor Argan has been more than assiduous in paying court to His Holiness, meeting him on no less than three occasions in the last month alone – more than his Christian Democrat predecessor. On two of these occassions they bumped into each other at religious ceremonies, but the most important was the official reception given earlier this month by the Pope for the mayor and the municipal council.

It was therefore unfortunate, not to say unfair, of the socialist magazine *Europeo* to choose its issue of that week to print its exposé of 'The Third Sack of Rome', detailing the hand of the Church in the depredations of the building industry in Rome since the war, and especially in the last 15 years. As scandals go in Italy, this one is by no means in the top league. The Lockheed affair, after all was referred to in the press as a *superscandalo*; in that scale of things the sack of Rome rates as no more than a *miniscandalo*. Nevertheless *Europeo* had done a good job in examining the holdings of the Vatican and the religious orders, and their land deals of the last few years.

The Church, it appears, owns no less than a quarter of the entire city, most of it concentrated in the 'Centro Storico' where land values are highest. It has done especially well out of the current vogue for 'restoration'. This means that old buildings are gutted and converted into flatlets, usually as *pied-à-terres* for out-of-town businessmen, at enormous profit. A nunnery in the Via del Orso was recently transformed through a Liechtenstein company into 24 such flatlets with a total value of £1,500,000. A convent in the Via Giulia has made some attempt to preserve an ecclesiastical flavour by becoming the Hotel Cardinal, complete with scarlet carpets. The present Rome Hilton is Vatican-owned. Begun in 1960, it stands on Monte Mario, an area originally scheduled as a public park.

One of the more spectacular coups in the sack, for which the ecclesiastical Establishment can take only part of the credit, were the profitable arrangements for the 1960 Olympics. The installations for the games were conveniently split in two, to the North and South of the city, connected by the Via Olympia. Naturally, the value of the land touched by the new avenue shot up 3-400 per cent. Among those who reaped the largest gains from this windfall were the Vatican's own real estate company Generale Immobiliare, followed by the Pontifical Works for the Preservation of the Faith, the Congregation of the Sons of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Sisters of Charity of St Catherine, Carmelites, and Trappists.

The Vatican has replied in hurt tones to the accusations. *L'Osservatore Romano*, in a front page article, denounced the *Europeo* article as irresponsible and unjustified – 'feeding a new form of anti-clericalism perhaps worse than anything that had gone before'. With predictable piety it went on to state that 'the religious orders, like any other citizen or body, make their plans and submit them for approval. If they obtain a permit they act on it, and if they don't they change their plans. If the laws exist, then those whose duty it is should impose them.'

But of course the Vatican, or the religious orders for that matter, are not in the least like any other citizen or body. The Vatican itself is, after all, a separate state, and according to the Concordat it signed with Mussolini in 1929, most of its properties in Rome are classed as extra-territorial and, therefore, exempt from Italian taxes. For example, when the Vatican sold a property next to the Presidential Palace to the press agency Ansa, this transaction was classed as being between 'a subject residing abroad and a subject residing in Italy'. Even without this extra-territorial bonus the religious institutions still get a 50-per-cent reduction in income tax if the property in question is for 'worship and religion or charity and instruction' – an elastic definition.

In addition to its pained denials of the main charges, the Church is also hinting darkly at ulterior motives for this unwelcome focusing on its extensive real estate. Certainly the publicity could hardly have come at a worse time. The Vatican has been pleased by the Communists' courtship, especially as the Concordat is currently being renegotiated, or rather confirmed. If Parliament does confirm, the Holy See's substantial privileges will remain untouched. As the Communists have been energetically supporting the Christian Democrat proposals on the Concordat this still seems the most likely outcome.

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London Diary

☐ It has been a good week for sell-outs. Ivor Richard's interminable version of Zeppelin diplomacy has left Ian Smith exactly where he was to start with – in the saddle. Reginald Maudling (described in the *Guardian* as the Tory party's 'doyen in the Commons on African affairs') has chipped in to say that only Smith is now sticking to the Kissinger plan; which means that Maudling has now rumbled what everybody else found out at Geneva. Still, probably very few Africans now feel that British government promises are worth anything. But a lot of Cypriots did, and this week's revelations about the true scope and frightfulness of the Turkish invasion will be taken to remind the Foreign Office that we do have a Treaty of Guarantee with the Cyprus government, and that it was felt embarrassing to stick to it in 1974. The least Labour can do, with a new US President who opposed the Nixon-Kissinger strategy for the Mediterranean, is to use the Human Rights Commission report to renew pressure on Turkey. But there is no sign of any such thing happening. Meanwhile, the wretched Banabans have found out in their turn that a British promise is worth nothing if it costs anything to keep. The absolute niceness of these people has led to a much wider sense of public outrage; often the small atrocities generate the largest response.

☐ It is excellent news that we may have our very own 'Monkey Trial' before long. Only this time Hertfordshire education authorities are dismissing a man who tells children that Genesis is true. In 1925, the great Clarence Darrow fought and lost a case in Tennessee on the opposite principle – but he won the war. Here is what he said about his opponent, William Jennings Bryan, who thought the Earth was only six thousand years old.

> Mr Bryan did not know that the monuments of Egypt, giving the genealogy of their kings and the dates of their reigns ran back more than seven thousand years . . . neither did he know of the millions of ages when the earth sped in its path around the sun before it was fitted for any life, animal or vegetable. About all this his mind was void. The solid rocks that were laid down millions of years ago meant not a thing to Mr Bryan; their conflict with Genesis was settled with the sanctimonious sophomoric: 'I am more interested in the Rock of Ages than the age of rocks.'

Bryan, 'the idol of all Morondom', died five days after the case. I hope Mr David Watson survives. But I thought he had a real crust protesting on behalf of Adam and Eve that 'the *syllabus* is 25 years out of date'.

☐ American socialists are almost as rare as rocking-horse droppings, and their doings are not reported very widely. I recently spent an evening with George Novack, the Marxist philosopher from New York who is one of the few American Leftists to appear in *Who's Who*. His main spare-time activity is publicising a $40m. suit brought by the Socialist Workers Party against the FBI and the CIA. Amazing disclosures have been made because, under the splendid Freedom of Information Act, citizens now have a right to know what the state has on them. No less than 100,000 pages of FBI material have been produced in court, and the Bureau has admitted several illegal wiretaps, burglaries, provocations and persecutions. There is lots more to come, despite the fact that the defendants have claimed 'informer privilege' to conceal the names of their 'plants', and this issue may take the case to the Supreme Court. One of the supporters of the SWP's cause is Morton Halperin, himself fresh from winning a $1m. suit against Nixon, Haldeman and Ehrlichman. Memo to various persons: the SWP is a Trotskyist organisation, but both American social-democratic parties are supporting its courtroom campaign.

☐ Crucifer did write about Gary Gilmore last week, but there is something I have been longing to say about the affair and haven't seen anywhere else. What do we make of a prison system whose long-stay inhabitants would rather die than continue to exist in it? (When Joe Hill was shot in the same state, his last request was for his body to be hauled to the state line because 'I don't want to be found dead in Utah'.) Second, I am surprised by how few people seem to have read *The Withered Arm*, a short story by Thomas Hardy which shows, through a tale of the superstitions surrounding a rural execution, how the shadow of the gallows debauches the surrounding society. Even if the filthy thing *were* proved to be a deterrent, there would still be good reasons for opposing it.

☐ It would not only be tactically inopportune to prosecute Enoch Powell, so much as it would be using the law to muffle unpopular (or even popular) views. People tend to forget that the famous dockers' 'march for Enoch' was not in support of his remarks, but in protest against his sacking by Heath. If the issue of racialism and the issue of free speech are ever confused, then the outlook is tough. Of course Powell's corner-boy allies in the National Front and National Party do explicitly incite violence, and of course that is an ordinary crime in law, and therefore different. The thing we really need is an organised political response to racialism. In that fight, I do not choose to stand next to John Ryman, the interim MP for Blyth, who offered a private prosecution of Powell this week. Not very long ago, during the EEC debate, he was referring to Helmut Schmidt as 'a patronising Hun'. What sentiment was *that* remark supposed to elicit?

☐ Always spare a thought for the unpaid apologist, especially the one who works for a benevolent despotism. One day he is saying that Hitler and Stalin will never sign a pact, the next he is saying that it was absolutely necessary all along. Those two were not exactly benevolent, but what must the defenders of Mrs Gandhi be saying now? A week or so ago, all the emergency measures were vital to the survival of India, and all the detainees were plotting subversion or worse. Now these fine regulations have been partly scrapped, and the vile plotters (some of them, including our own Sundar Rajan) released. Perhaps the conspiracy has crept as far as Indira herself? Should not the toadies denounce her weakness? The thing to remember at these times is the remark of Eugene Debs (another great American socialist) to the effect that the man who has the power to let you out of prison is the same man who can put you back in again.

☐ The exchanges between *Times* readers on Canterbury's preparedness to make a limited accommodation with Rome seem far too lukewarm for my taste. Is not the ancient offence of *praemunire* being committed in this resort to a foreign court and ecclesiastical authority? By all means let the C of E adopt the status of Antioch or Byzantium – but there must be a price. Disestablishment is long overdue, and one step could be taken at once. The bench of bishops should be removed from the House of Lords – good training for more decisive surgery to come. Hilaire Belloc's

> Lord Calvin thought the bishops should not sit
> As peers of Parliament, and *argued* it
> In spite of which, for years, and years, and years,
> They went on sitting with their fellow peers –

is apposite here. They have sat too long for any good they may be doing. And now Popery. In the name of God, go.

☐ People who write books should never complain about their reception, especially if (like me) they are themselves occasional reviewers. As it happens, with Peter Kellner I wrote a book about the Prime Minister which came out last September. Its reception was pretty kind on the whole. The NEW STATESMAN followed its excellent principle of not flattering staff members, and gave it a snorter written by David Marquand (now out of the kitchen) which ended 'the omens are more favourable than I dared to hope when he was elected'. The *Spectator's* unique George Hutchinson said we were 'judging (or rather pre-judging) a Prime Minister when he has scarcely settled in'. All I want to know is, does anyone still feel the same way?

Christopher Hitchens

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ The BBC yesterday cancelled a Radio 4 discussion with three lesbians because it was 'inappropriate' for Sunday broadcasting. – *Observer* (Barbara Rapaport)

☐ The creation of 'priestesses' could mean the end of the Church of England. Chancellor the Rev. E. Garth Moore said that for a woman to act as a priest smacked of transvestism. – *Church Times* (Anthony Michell)

☐ To commemorate Southampton's victory in the F.A. Cup at Wembley last year, the City Council is to plant a new rose garden to replace the one trampled by fans as they welcomed the Saints home. – *Sunday Express* (W. Pugh)

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University Forum

Tim Bick*

Oxford's 19th-Century Ghost

'Could ya show me the campus, son?'

Bedecked with sunglasses and camera, and sporting a cowboy hat, the middle-aged American tourist stood in the gateway of Magdalen College, gazing up the High Street. The first-year undergraduate at whom the inquiry had been directed clearly lacked the pertinacity required to convey the concept of a collegiate university to the foreigner. Gesticulating vaguely towards Carfax, he walked off.

The story is an old Oxford favourite; but while once it left that cosy feeling of satisfaction – no one else could really be expected to understand, could they? – for some short while now it has been a sore point among most students. The truth is today that the question 'Where's the campus?' is more likely to come from the first-year undergraduate himself.

It is not the university bureaucracy that people miss; the administrative blocks, the lecture rooms, the libraries and the laboratories – they are all there somewhere, dotted around the city. It is a student social centre that is so obviously lacking. The 30-odd college Junior Common Rooms were once the scene of the sane and civilised conversation, for which Oxford retains a somewhat spurious reputation. Nowadays these are more akin to sleazy hotel television lounges, the whiff of stale smoke and fish and chips hanging in the air. Since the finance for students' social facilities takes the form of a *per capita* local authority grant, economies of scale permit only sparse provision for college common rooms of three to four hundred members, compared with the plastic and glass 'fun palaces' possible for a student union of several thousand. For example, Oxford Polytechnic, a couple of miles out of the centre of the city, affords open-plan lounges, a concert hall, a bar and numerous meeting rooms – all on the premises, while the outlying halls of residence each have their own common rooms.

The Oxford Union Society is the standard reason why the university refuses to put up the capital for what is an integral part of almost every other university. The Union, however, does not appear to be what the undergraduates want. In the days when practically everyone arriving at Oxford had trodden the same path from public school, the Oxford Union seemed to work. The members of the young elite needed a place where they could develop the skills of civilised, rational debate (so necessary for a parliamentary career), where they could meet afterwards to drink together. Then the grammar school boys began to come in their droves, reinforced latterly by comprehensive school pupils: together these now number fully half the university. Looking for a good technical education, to pay back their parents' hard-earned cash in achievement (and frequently wondering why they had come to Oxford), these recruits have no time for the Oxford Union.

The Union has now become the preserve of a dwindling number of the social descendants of Gladstone, Salisbury, Curzon and Asquith – and even of the Foots. The debates are rich in those amusing spectacles of the earnest, eloquent young patrician who can find no one to argue with, and few to argue for. The elite is in difficulties, and it knows it. With opportunities diminishing in the outside world, the emphasis has been shifted from the debating chamber to buying votes for precious office in the bar, and dinners with today's adult Establishment, the luckier products of happier times in the Union.

The figures speak for themselves. The Union, annually attracting fewer and fewer members, has in recent years had to raise its subscription dramatically, this year to £31 for life membership, a sum of princely proportions for the majority whose sole income is the student grant. In the spring of 1975 the Union Society's bank declared its intention to call in its loan for accumulated debt, which stood at £70,000. The Union was losing £20,000 a year, on a total income of no more than £26,000. The one chance for survival lay in an appeal to old members – a viable proposition only if the Union Society could claim back the income tax already paid by donors, and receive gifts free of Capital Transfer Tax. This necessitated the Oxford Union becoming a charity.

Two years ago most Oxford undergraduates would have laughed if anyone had suggested that the Union could become a charity. But become a charity it did, joining the ranks of such other deserving cases as Oxfam, Christian Aid and Shelter. A horde of the most august public figures Britain possesses, owing their all to the Oxford Union, clubbed together (like the old days) to run the appeal. Harold Macmillan, ex-treasurer, Balliol and incumbent Chancellor of the University, took the lead with the embarrassingly servile co-operation of *The Times*. The bank, not surprisingly, was appeased. It seemed to many undergraduates that if money was to be spent on them at all, they would like a students' union, open to everyone. They had voted thus in a referendum of all members of the university in the summer of 1974, but the powers-that-be seemed little concerned about that. An exclusive private club was to be preserved at public expense, right over the heads of those to whom it was supposed to be a charity; precisely those who had rejected it.

However, as things turned out, no one needed to worry. The appeal, launched in November 1975, was intended to raise £750,000, to cover extensive repairs, staff pension funds and the establishment of an investment fund to bridge future deficits. Fourteen months later, a mere £45,000 has been raised, insufficient even to pay off the actual current debt, which the latest accounts put at £97,000.

It is a matter of conjecture when the bank will call in its loan for good, but it now seems inevitable. This time all the avenues of survival will have been explored and the site will have to be sold by the charitable trustees, who now own the premises. One can only speculate what will happen then. Will the university step in and do what it has been asked to do for so long – buy the buildings and turn them into a union for all undergraduates? The Union Society's site is the only suitable one likely to become available in the centre of the city for some years. The individual colleges and the university already hold, between them, an immense amount of real estate; some kind of collective purchase of the Union Society could perhaps be seen as the shedding of a few financially profitable assets in favour of another, with a functional return.

So what is the attitude of the university and colleges to this? The instincts of the colleges' governing bodies would still be to oppose purchase. Jealous of their tradition, the dons would fear their hitherto self-sufficient colleges turning into mere halls of residence, with their undergraduates eating and meeting outside the portals. The university, insultingly indifferent to student wishes, is against the idea too. The main reason the university has been so anxious to prop up the Union Society is that its existence successfully precludes any effective organisation of general undergraduate opinion, which would in time challenge the custom and ceremony in which its officers have a vested interest. Without college or university backing, it is doubtful whether a central union would be brought any nearer by the collapse of the Union Society.

However, the case in favour of a central union gains momentum by the year, and ought to weigh increasingly with the authorities. With college catering costs soaring, the traditional, formal hall dinners are already becoming poorly attended, and since about a third of all students have to find rooms outside their colleges, the college attachment is anyway wearing thin.

The present Oxford Union stands, however, for an Oxford of a past forgotten by the students of the present. It is now nothing more than an asylum for an ancestral clique. The Central Students' Union which might take its place, would, if other universities are anything to go by, serve as a home for the weak and penniless students' interests. It could also provide facilities for clubs and societies; economic catering, more fit for students than the nightly three-course dinners served in the colleges; above all, a social centre for the student majority, which is still artifically divided into single sex colleges. Would, one wonders, Harold Macmillan, Robin Day or Michael Foot care to run an appeal for this?

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

Thoroughly Modern Mimi

The original production, by Sir Barry Jackson at the Kingsway Theatre in 1925, of *Hamlet* in modern dress caused quite a little stir by its novelty and found every dramatic critic for once in benevolent mood ('How freshly the great old play comes up', etc). The years have somewhat blurred one's memory of the details of dress and scenery but the gloomy Dane himself seemed to be almost permanently in roomy plus-fours and brogues, like the then Prince of Wales, and just in from a refreshing round of golf with Horatio on the testing Elsinore links, Francisco probably picking up a little pin-money as caddy. As to the Queen, the sartorial example of the wife of the living monarch of the time, Queen Mary, would have been of negligible value as a trend-setter and, for day wear, Gertrude would almost certainly have plumped for a flecked tweed two-piece in bottle green with dyed musquash collar. Polonius was, of course, top-hatted and in a tail coat, with poor old Osric looking perfectly idiotic in mauve Oxford bags.

Dressing players and setting plays in periods and places not their own has become a commonplace and we now think little of the practice, merely keeping a watchful eye out for any happy inventions that the director may have dreamt up (Lady Macbeth feverishly polishing her bi-focals to help her read the letter which, written by her ambitious husband in a state of considerable excitement and exaltation, may well have been legible only with difficulty). The other night, watching on the telly a pleasing performance of *Hänsel und Gretel*, I fell to wondering why the directors of operas have gone in so little for up-dating and playing about with the musical works entrusted to their care. In a present-day *La Bohème*, for instance, Mimi and those artists would be 'squatting', protected from the law and with no rent payable, in their respective attics, surrounded by colour TV sets obtained from social security benefits, with Mimi's cold little hands snug and warm in Kozystretch wool-substitute mittens provided by the local branch of the W.I. And as she swallows her health-service cough-linctus, she looks forward to the day when she is old enough for Age Concern to bring her meals on wheels.

It is true that in the *Hänsel und Gretel* of which I write, the wicked witch was to be seen spying out her gingerbread prey through a pair of periscope army field-glasses and looking momentarily like the opponent that Field-Marshal Montgomery always referred to as Wommel, but with the first scene of all, what an opportunity was missed. The children, you'll recall, are alone in their parents' cottage, Hänsel making brooms and Gretel knitting stockings. Day is waning, they are both hungry, and a kindly neighbour, knowing the family's poverty, has brought them something for supper. And guess what it is? A jug of milk, if you please. At the sight of it, Hänsel becomes thoroughly over-excited, but what modern child would dream of accepting just plain milk for supper? There was a chance here for the good neighbour to struggle in with fish fingers and chips, bottles of Pepsi-Cola and cartons of raspberry yogurt. Then when the mother returns, instead of accidentally knocking over the dull old milk, she can send the fish fingers flying and slop the yogurt down her dress. Much more realistic and in keeping with the times. The children would, when caught and baked in the oven, become either Mars Bars or Crunchies.

An opera that could benefit enormously from up-to-the-minute treatment is *Tristan und Isolde*. The Irish Princess Isolde, coming over by ship to wed King Mark of Cornwall, a province which has, as you see, set a fine example of extreme devolution, is normally discovered, attended by her handmaiden, Brangäne (a muddler, obtained from who knows which domestic agency), in a sort of scruffy tent on deck, the purpose of the canvas shield being to stop the crew entertaining impure thoughts at the sight of females afloat. The last time I travelled from America to England it was on the Q.E.II and we put in for a time to Cork harbour. Here it would be a simple matter for Isolde to board the liner and thus our very first glimpse of her would be in her slap-up stateroom on A Deck, through whose inner portholes Tristan could feast his eyes on her blond plaits. In addition to her loud, tuneful voice, we know that Isolde has abilities as a dispensing chemist (love potions and poisonous draughts a speciality) and a sizeable medicine-chest and some parcels from Boots catch the eye on a table between the twin beds (she's doubling up with poor old Brangäne, a martyr to sea-sickness and forever stuffing herself with Kwells). Diplomas on the cabin walls from the scientific departments of Dublin and Belfast universities, together with certificates from the St John's Ambulance, bring us right into the 20th century and complete the picture of a studious, gifted girl about to cut short a promising career in the field of healing and make a most unfortunate marriage.

The whole of Wagner, indeed, lies before us, simply crying out for modern treatment. The laced bodice and floating peach-coloured draperies, albeit with tin helmet and armoured stomacher, into which Brünnhilde is usually thrust are laughably inadequate for the arduous, rocky, assault-course work that is expected of her. Her dainty footwear is particularly unsuitable. Nobody can ride a horse, lug dead heroes about and be ready for the boudoir all in one breath, so to speak. The proper attire for Brünnhilde is Tyrolean mountaineering rig – stout boots, alpenstock, coils of rope, lederhosen and a hat with a saucy feather in it. A rucksack festooned with camping equipment would show her to be a girl who really means business. She can change into something more filmy and appealing later on, though Siegfried will easily spot the woman beneath the envelope, even when she is suitably kitted out for the heights. Siegfried himself must, of course, discard those rather mangy fur garments that carry us back to the dear old days of the invaluable Clarksons of Wardour Street and show himself for the man he is in cerise, male model, Y-fronted posing briefs. That sword, about which such a tremendous fuss is made, should be clearly marked as having been manufactured by Messrs Wilkinson.

When Siegfried finds the sleeping Brünnhilde on the tippy-topmost rock and kisses her awake, they plight their troth and betrothal gifts are exchanged. Here, alas, we can do very little as the presents themselves (he to her, a ring: she to him, an extremely large horse) are important plot-wise, but an inventive director could add on a few little extra tokens of appreciation of the kind often found on any wedding gift list – a phosphor-bronze coal-scuttle, a nest of walnut occasionals, matching disposal-bins, a croquet set, kebab skewers. Then the lovers, doubtless exhausted by the day's excitements and naturally wishful to put their feet up and rest awhile, go off into, of all uncomfortable quarters for such a moment, a rough cave. This won't do at all. I suppose it's a bit too much to expect a luxi-motel at that altitude, and their absence of luggage might cause raised eyebrows at the desk, but at the very least Brünnhilde could rummage about in her equipment, drag out her inflatable Up-In-A-Jiffy collapsible tent and rubber mattress and get busy blowing. She's got, heaven knows, the lungs for it.

Roger Woddis

Veneration Game

I say, I say, what's young and grey
  And bound to make you wince?
You haven't heard? Then pass the word –
  It's Brucey and the Prince.
What fun he had, the bonny lad,
  And Forsyth was a scream!
This double-act outshone, in fact,
  The Wilson-Yarwood team.

When did you see such comedy?
  And have you read the raves?
With Charles on form, it's now the norm
  When showbiz rules the waves.
They laughed like drains, they missed their trains,
  They fell beneath his spell:
Such charm, such it and – wait for it –
  Oh, didn't he do well?

He topped the bill with comic skill
  And quite professional flair,
With winning smile and polished style,
  To match his polished hair.
It won't be long before he's on
  The entertainment page,
But what, we fear, we'll never hear
  Is 'Kindly leave the stage.'

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Letters to the Editor

Power to the Power Stations

Sir, Jeremy Bugler's piece about the implications of the Think Tank's electricity supply industry prescriptions (NS 21 January) makes a most important point. To meet the immediate needs (pressing as these can be seen to be) of the workforce and managements of GEC, Parsons, and Babcock and Wilcox, the Central Policy Review Staff has recommended a 'steady ordering programme' of power stations which would almost certainly entail an inexorable national commitment to nuclear power. Plainly, exigencies of industrial and employment policy only should not be allowed to shape a decision of such consequence.

Yet there is still a further ingredient in the industrial mix which is pushing the nation in the same direction. If the 1976 Plowden Report's principal recommendations are implemented, the electricity supply industry *itself* could become even more centralised than at present. For reasons of cost effectiveness and management efficiency, an industrial structure would then emerge which would be irrevocably committed to the particular economies of scale claimed for large power station units (i.e. increasingly nuclear). In written evidence in 1975 the Council for the Protection of Rural England urged the Plowden Committee to consider the implications for energy policy that such technostructural streamlining might carry. But nowhere in the Plowden Report was the existence of the problem even acknowledged.

All this developing momentum towards nuclear power has a further important implication. Let us suppose a streamlined industry, pushed inexorably from behind by the demands of its suppliers for a steady stream of contracts, comes to propose specific nuclear power stations on pristine sites. Is it to be expected that an educated public, nourished in recent years to 'participate' in land-use planning decisions, will meekly acquiesce in the construction of such white elephants? Recent experience at motorway inquiries surely suggest that *diktats* from above on environmentally intrusive proposals – however scrupulously presented as matters of national 'policy' – could produce serious conflicts, even entailing civil disobedience. It is an issue which (inter alia) Michael Flood and I have explored in a recent report, *Nuclear Prospects*. Yet one electricity industry response to this suggestion has been that such analysis itself amounts to adocacy of civil disobedience. No doubt the Think Tank is right to consider that the consequences of not rescuing Parsons, Babcock and Wilcox *et al.* would be horrendous. But there is no sign that they have weighed these consequences against the other – longer-term but equally traumatic – possibilities that could arise from the course they have now spelt out.

R. B. GROVE-WHITE
Council for the Protection of Rural England
4 Hobart Place
London SW1

Sir, Jeremy Bugler's support for the power plant industry is most welcome, but it is a pity he gave credence to the CEGB's absurd predictions about the likely increase in electricity prices caused by bringing forward the order for completing Drax power station. The Government has already publicly disowned the CEGB's 25 to 40 per cent price rise forecast. In addition in a parliamentary reply to me Mr Benn has said that the range of likely increase was from 'negligible to 4 per cent', depending on what view you took about the growth in electricity demand. Further support for this view is contained in an unpublished (but well leaked) NEDO report which suggests that bringing Drax forward would actually save money, as it would allow older inefficient power stations to be phased out earlier.

The consequences of not ordering Drax now, as Jeremy Bugler rightly says, would be traumatic. C. A. Parsons, who are situated in my constituency, have an enviable record for technological achievement and export success (both, incidentally, superior to Sir Arnold Weinstock's GEC), with a dedicated and skilled workforce. Parsons is in no sense a lame duck, begging for government money. Neither is it obstructing any long term reorganisation of the power plant industry, as recommended by the Central Policy Review Staff. But the Government must realise that consultations about rationalisation cannot be allowed to hold up the decision on Drax. The placing of the Drax order before the end of February is imperative, if Tyneside is to avoid the disaster of mass redundancies.

MIKE THOMAS
House of Commons

Sir, Full marks for effort must go to Mr Daglish of the UK Atomic Energy Authority; his letter (NS 21 January) makes a fine addition to the record of truth distortion in which the Authority has specialised. NEW STATESMAN readers must have been a little surprised to learn that the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution gave implicit support to nuclear expansion. Some may have laboured under the misapprehension that the Flowers report actually cast doubts on the desirability of Britain's nuclear prospects.

Granted the Commission did not oppose the role of the existing nuclear plants, but they were less keen about development. They believed 'it would be irresponsible . . . to commit future generations to the consequences of fission power . . . unless it has been demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt that at least one method exists for the safe isolation of . . . wastes' (para. 181).

Unlike the AEA, the Commission did not see fast-breeder reactors as God's gift to energy consumers. They urged investment in alternative energy research, and postponement of a commitment to breeders. 'We should not rely for energy supply on a process that produces such a hazardous substance as plutonium unless there is no reasonable alternative' (para. 507).

The imminent decisions concerning the building of the Windscale reprocessing plant, and the construction of the first commercial fast reactor, will be crucial for Britain's future. Both imply a commitment to the plutonium economy. The expense of the latter project would prohibit realistic investment in the alternatives, and force future governments to continue with nuclear energy development. The export of Breeders would be encouraged – leading to the probability of nuclear proliferation and terrorist thefts of plutonium. But, as with arms, Britain would not accept responsibility for the consequences of sales.

Pleasing though it is to see the AEA welcoming public debate, one might feel happier if they had not already had it stifled. The Authority possesses the only permanently armed police force in Britain; it is only loosely responsible to Parliament. Effective discussion of the security implications posed by nuclear power has been prohibited.

CHRIS DAVIES
Young Liberals Nuclear Energy Campaign Organiser
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Canterbury

Longford's Lament

Sir, It seems to be my fate – no doubt an excellent mortification – to go through life with a scintillating journalist tied to my tail. First it was Alan Brien. But I like to think that he and I are reconciled. He seems pleased that I want his epitaph for me ('the outcasts' outcast') to be inscribed on my tombstone. Then there was Richard Ingrams, but these days he has bigger fish to fry, or be fried by.

Now there comes along Clive James to haunt me, borrowing a phrase, 'with malignant fidelity'. When I wrote a book about John Kennedy, I said to myself 'That'll fox him. At least he can't pretend to know about *him*.' Not a bit of it. Here he comes popping up again on the principle of 'escape me never'. Not that I wish to escape everything he has written about my book (NS 21 January).

I recall an uncle of mine, the late Lord Dunsany, being denied a literary prize in the Irish National Games through the influence of W. B. Yeats. He asked my aunt 'Is there any competition where Willie Yeats isn't the judge?'. 'I don't think he's judging the chess', she replied guardedly. 'Get me the village blacksmith. He used to play a decent game.' And of course my uncle went on to win the Irish championships. But I don't see any way out for myself on those lines. If after much agony I manage to reach the final of our local chess championship, I know well that I shall find Clive James among the judges and be disqualified accordingly.

FRANK LONGFORD
Sidgwick & Jackson
1 Tavistock Chambers
Bloomsbury Way, WC1

No Backs to the Front

Sir, Unlike Robert Silver, ('University Forum', 14 January) we were involved in the campaign against the National Front in the recent Cambridge by-election. On the basis of this experience, we feel confident in asserting that the National Front need neither 'pity' nor 'contempt'; they need stopping. When they express their 'bewilderment in the face of the inexplicable' by accusing Mr Silver of murdering Christian children we may be justified in laughing; when they mount unprovoked attacks on their opponents (as happened twice during the Cambridge campaign), the joke wears a little thin.

Mr Silver's catalogue of personal aberration solves nothing and explains nothing. The National Front staged two public meetings in Cambridge before the by-election. Mr Silver attended a gathering at which Messrs Webster, Tyndall and Fountaine addressed a coachload of supporters bussed from London for the purpose. They were preaching to the converted, and thus not constrained by the demands of reason, truth or logic. Frighteningly enough, every gobbet of nonsense was given a warm ovation. At their other meeting, however, things were very different. John Tyndall delivered a speech prepared for a right-wing university society (who cancelled his invitation) to an audience of journalists, photographers and a handful of local supporters. He sounded impressively reasonable: crime on the streets, reds in government, unions and universities, social security scroungers and disloyalty in the media, nothing which couldn't be found any Sunday in an *Express* editorial.

Given the publicity Mr Silver seems prepared to grant them, and television time at a future general election, it is this vote-catching aspect of their policies, not the atavistic fascism, that the Front will stress. No doubt their attitudes and obsessions are rooted in individual psychopathology, but this was hardly responsible for the 45 per cent poll collected by the two racist parties (National Front and National Party)

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at a Deptford Council election last July. Popular success of that order cannot derive from the neurotic fantasy and infantile regression which interest Mr Silver.

Racist policies flourish in areas of high unemployment formerly dominated by a single manufacturing industry, sustained in the recent past by immigrant workers. Blackburn and Bradford, textile towns whose industry was buttressed until its decline by migrant labour, are both centres of neo-fascist activity. The lack of a strong local political tradition also assists the National Front in gaining a foothold: they blossom in Leicester, but wither in heavily-unionised Nottingham.

To seek for the origins of our 'thoroughly modern fascists' in intellectual debility or private hang-ups may be morally satisfying, but it is scarcely an appropriate tactic for a time of widening social divisions and economic inertia. The Front are more intelligent than some of their more sophisticated enemies. Their votes are garnered from lost jobs, spiralling prices, soaring rents. Undergraduate condescension may offer the consolations of imagined superiority, but it ignores the core of the problem: the manifest failure of the very Fabian social democracy whose cause Mr Silver espouses.

STEPHEN GLYNN
Queens' College
BOYD TONKIN
Trinity College

Cambridge

In Praise of Dennis Skinner

Sir, Of course Dennis Skinner's action in the Commons on 17 January was absolutely right and James Fenton (NS 21 January) deserves praise as a journalist for saying so and, incidentally, giving us the best written assessment of Dennis Skinner's character and contribution so far. But Mr Fenton is not quite right about Dennis Skinner's 'romantic projection' of the working-class movement. Skinner is not a romantic and his understanding of workers goes much wider than a pit village.

Throughout Britain last week in the working and every other class there might have been divided opinions about Anthony Eden's virtues or lack of them and varying degrees of sorrow at his death. But everyone was asking 'why the hell should Parliament knock off for a day?' and that, essentially, was Dennis Skinner's question. 'Why, too,' he was asking, 'do we go through this hour of convoluted self-righteousness in Parliament when former notables expire?' It is not disrespect or arrogance or even the dreaded egalitarianism which prompts such a question but simple distaste for the particular kind of wordy lamentation on such occasions. Some of us, anticipating the parliamentary embalming of Lord Avon, stayed away. Most of us who did that wish now we hadn't. We could at least have cheered the challenging living instead of pontificating about the unfortunate dead.

NEIL KINNOCK
House of Commons

Magistrates and Defendants

Sir, The letter from Mr Stanley Goodman (NS 14 January) is so intemperate and ill-informed that it really does not deserve a reasoned response. However, the right to jury trial is so important that in case anyone should be so mistaken as to confuse his hysteria for informed opinion I hope you will allow me to reply.

The Criminal Law Bill (Lords) proposes, inter alia, to abolish the right to trial by jury for offences under the Sexual Offences Act, the Public Order Act, the Public Meetings Act, the Theatres Act, the Police Act, and for theft of goods valued at less than £20. Apart from the latter category these are all extremely sensitive issues that demand and deserve a jury trial. Mr Goodman's assertion to the contrary, the individuals charged with these offences will not be criminals. They will be political protestors and demonstrators, homosexuals, and persons involved in controversial theatrical productions. Equally sensitive are cases of alleged assault on policemen, particularly as it is well known that magistrates are less sceptical of police evidence than are juries. And the theft of goods worth less than £20 will catch not the hardened criminal but the housewife who, indeed, has more to lose in terms of her reputation than the criminal. Mr Goodman says that 'the only ones who will suffer by the bringing in of this Bill will be villains'. Hardly. The serious and professional criminal does not inhabit the above categories and retains the right to a trial by his peers.

I don't know which magistrates' court Mr Goodman 'conducts' but someone should have told him that the courts are not there for his convenience or any of those who work in them. They are there to dispense justice. Unfortunately the facts show that magistrates are not as adept at this task as are juries – and Mr Goodman's nonsense may be a clue as to why this is so.

Nor can we allow administrative convenience or cost to triumph over the right to a fair trial. Already over 60 MPs have signed my House of Commons Motion opposing these proposals. Now that they have read Mr Goodman's letter I would expect even more to do so.

ROBERT KILROY-SILK
House of Commons

The Print and the Press

Sir, Crucifer (NS 21 January) asks: 'Why should a printer be expected automatically to set in type something he not only finds repugnant but knows to be untrue?' Because a healthy dissemination of information and opinion depends on the willingness of printers (including print employers) to print any legal material placed before them.

This principle was accepted without question until very recently. Everybody associated with the printing industry knows how little attention printers pay to the meaning of the material they print. It is important that people like Crucifer urge printers not to abandon this invaluable principle while they are participating in the national debates on industrial democracy and the ownership and control of the media.

PHILIP NATAL
164 Hillbury Road
Warlingham
Surrey

Sir, Okay, the action of *The Times* printers in stopping the Astor report was not censorship. But don't expect me to be sorry for you when somebody on the NS staff is stopped by your own printers from making a comment on Dennis Skinner that is less than fulsome.

LEON DRUCKER
25 Dicey Avenue
London NW2

Sir, If you say, rather dramatically, that I believe printers 'exist to be helots or serfs', you must know, as you were for so long my colleague. But I fear you can't have read my offending article in *Index*. I say there that the print unions should have 'a special right of reply that they could exercise whenever an independent tribunal (including a union representative) agreed that they had a case for one'. This is a proposal I have made several times in the *Observer* and personally to some union leaders, including Lord Briginshaw, when he was still himself the dreaded leader of one of the largest of the serf-and-helot organisations.

DAVID ASTOR
9 Cavendish Avenue
London NW8

The error over the date of the first Count Károlyi – corrected by a reader (Letters, 14 January) – was not A. J. P. Taylor's responsibility. It was ours. – Ed. NS

What Hitler Said

Sir, Mr Ivens (Letters 21 January) can be sure that before writing the letter you kindly printed on 14 January I had looked up his original reference to the *Bulletin of International News*. Even Chatham House can be wrong some times, as it was with its short extract from Hitler's Munich speech of 24 February 1941. Meanwhile, I have additionally checked the full text published first by the *Voelkischer Beobachter* on 25 February 1941. I am even prepared as an act of repentance to join Aims for Freedom and Enterprise, if Mr Ivens or anybody else could show me any sentence in that text which could have been mistranslated or misunderstood as meaning that 'basically National Socialism and Marxism are the same'.

J. W. BRUEGEL
21 Connaught Drive
London NW11

Hugh Dalton 1887-1962

Sir, Could I make an appeal, through your letter columns, to any reader who knew Hugh Dalton, Labour politician, economist and writer, or who possesses any documents relating to him? I have been commissioned by Cambridge University Press to write a biography of Dalton, and I would be extremely interested to hear from anybody who has a letter from him, however seemingly trivial, or who recalls an incident involving him, however apparently slight. Nothing will be quoted without permission, and any material used will be fully acknowledged.

BEN PIMLOTT
Department of Politics
Newcastle upon Tyne University

Pilgrim's Way

Sir, It may be, as Mr Berlyn suggests ('Kent's Stunted Growth,' NS 21 January), in a sentence of some whimsy, that 'few architects tread the pilgrim's way to visit the Canterbury site of the University of Kent', but those who do are most distinguished. Sir Denys Lasdun lectures here on 28 January.

HAMISH F. G. SWANSTON
Eliot College
The University
Canterbury, Kent

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

V. S. Pritchett

The Crab's Shell

Frederick Rolfe: Baron Corvo by MIRIAM J. BENKOVITZ *Hamish Hamilton* £6.50

Reading Miriam J. Benkovitz's life of Frederick Rolfe, who called himself Baron Corvo, one spots in him a Gissing turned inside out. Corvo was all shady personality and Gissing, the real novelist, was scrupulously without it. Their basic resemblance is in original circumstance. Both were lower-middle-class casualties, trained by Puritan poverty for self-righteous failure; both are emotionally arrested or diverted from the norm. Gissing first marries a prostitute and, after, a virago-servant; Corvo is a pederast; both are underdogs. Gissing has no influential friends, Rolfe-Corvo loses his; the pair are naturals for the future of the snubbed hack and the unsaleable 'masterpiece', but are imbued with the pride of the artist-prince which was the cult of *fin de siècle* Bohemia. They belong to the period when the gifted became obsessed with the defeat of aristocracy (i.e. genius) at the hands of Demos, the hooligan mob with its prolific diet, the new popular journalism.

And it is here they part: Gissing the truth-telling realist, drudged and drew directly on the lives around him, though privately he thought of himself as an ancient Greek: Corvo was rigid in his personal dream and quarrelled with those who disturbed it. He cadged a living – also an honorary title. from a rich Anglo-Italian patroness – and turned into a small fantastic with a studied Oxford accent. His first eccentric gesture, not without germs of self-interest and pretence, was to turn Roman Catholic and to leave school at 15; at 25 he began a long struggle to enter the priesthood. His faith seems to have been genuine to the frantic point of pedantry; he became more papist than the Pope and such a prayer-wheel that he was soon at war with his fellow Catholics, high or low. His vision of himself was paranoid: as Miss Benkovitz says more sympathetically, he made the impossible demands of a child in an adult world. He was generally accused of lying and sponging, but if he was continually slapped down by people who were exasperated by him, even reduced to semi-starvation and self-imposed vagrancy, he always rose again indomitably, convinced of himself as a genius and an enterprise. *Hadrian the Seventh* is a brilliant piece of vengeful autobiography; and *The Desire and Pursuit of the Whole* a half moving, half absurd psychological give-away. It explains his pederasty: he deeply felt that puberty is a child's most dreadful experience, for the indeterminate wholeness of boyhood and girlhood sex is destroyed. For him, to remain the boy-girl is the only wholeness: he is in a search for complete identity with a friend who embodies this peculiarity.

The quest – as we know from A. J. A. Symons's classic portrait *The Quest for Corvo* – was fanatical and went floundering into the farcical, the picaresque and finally ended in squalor. Although Miss Benkovitz spells out the story in minute detail and writes very well, I do not think her long book tells us essentially any more than Symons has done, although certain episodes of his career do benefit by expansion; one must grant that the pettifogging of deep neurotics is an important part of their case. And if the detail of Rolfe's dreary and perpetual quarrels as a downtrodden tutor or schoolmaster is tedious, the account of his emotional and financial crushes catches the point that he had a changing image and that he depended, as an actor does, on being seen, heard and talked about. His quarrels also led to amusing changes of company. It is strange to see this man who cultivated archaic prose and speech and who could almost pass as a priest, ghosting a book on African agriculture for a Colonel, flirting with Hugh Bland and E. Nesbit about Socialism – which he detested, but he sent £5 to Bernard Shaw as a contribution to the Fabian Society (hardly the home of the True Church).

Rolfe was a poseur or, more sympathetically, one can say he projected images of himself in which for the time being he idealised and believed. His expectations, once friendship had been given, were preposterous: if he was an adventurer, he really lived or half-lived in the imagination and was self-deluded. When the illusion dissolved because he asked too much he became quarrelsome, litigious and scarifying. His rage at having his vocation denied went deep and by the time he settled down to his notorious Venetian period in middle age, he let himself go.

Miss Benkovitz's skill in threading her way through a minutely entangled story comes into its own as Rolfe-Corvo's life did in Venice. He had called himself variously the Raven, the crab of unbreakable shell, the master of felinity and, after 35 years of failure as a writer, his nerve hardened. The sense of 'peerless difference' from other men which he had ingeniously constructed, was now absolute and sustained by long training in a kind of animal cunning. It is not enough to call him a poseur: in Venice he lived the image he had projected. One reason was the beauty of Venice itself; but the private reason was that the 20 years of celibacy required by his attempt to be acceptable to the priesthood had lapsed. He had not lost his faith; he was still ardent in trotting to his prayers. Rome, or rather the clergy and the Catholic laity, had betrayed him. He still had his debts, and his insulting begging letters; he went after the well-off among the English residents and the old story of viciously biting the hand that fed him began once more. But now he was a pagan. His worship of young men and boys was now excited by the young gondoliers. He had always kept himself strong by exercises, but now he became an oarsman on the canal; the young gondoliers were his friends and teachers. He had his own little boat in which he would sleep out in the winter, plagued by the rats of the canals, when he was evicted from his lodgings or dropped as intolerable by the residents. He was writing *The Desire and Pursuit of the Whole* and now caricatured his benefactors. To one, a long-suffering Dr Van Someren, he wrote that he was dishonest in mind, a bore and a hypocrite. His savaging of this dietician is very funny: 'I never want to see your food-splashed face again, you have had your chance and you have mucked it up most magnificently.'

But if there were months of desperation, Rolfe-Corvo went on with his literary work in his painfully beautiful handwriting, and there are an adventurer's spells of fortune. At one time he had a gondola equipped with sails on which he had painted crabs and ravens, a heraldic device at the prow and 'a great Saint George (a Perseus-Poseidon Hermes kind of nudity) at the poop'. It was lined with the skins of leopards and lynxes and was handled (John Cowper Powys wrote) by 'a Being who might have passed as a faun', while at rest upon the leopard skins lay Corvo, 'one of the most whimsical of writers'. That was glory. But the notorious Venice Letters written by Rolfe to Masson Fox between 1909 and 1910 tell the story of moral disintegration which shocked A. J. A. Symons. They appear to show Rolfe as a pimp, enticing a pederast, offering to supply boys; and one letter describes what purports to be one of his own sexual encounters. As Miss Benkovitz says, there is a case for thinking Rolfe was chaste but that if this is not accepted then the Letters are in fact pornographic letters designed to entice by imagined accounts of lust, and are a disguised form of begging. This, knowing his skill and history, they may very well be. What they do reveal, as she says, is the 'rampant sexuality' of a man living in his imagination. How can one tell? One can only note that his chief gift as a writer was his visual power, his invention of startling if affected images. He is a man for sensations and the physical surfaces – not for nothing had he started life as a photographer, colourer of photographs and designer of emblems – as this random example from *Hadrian the Seventh* shows when he writes that the Pope's voice: 'was a cold white candent voice which was more caustic than silver nitrate and more thrilling than a scream.'

Miss Benkovitz's *Life* does not claim to be a critical biography and, as she says, there can be no complete understanding of Rolfe without an examination of the work in relation to his period. Still she tells one enough. It is a matter of taste, but for myself the affectations and insinuations of his Huysmanish world have no appeal. One has the impression of surfeit, fake and even of hysteria loitering in the wings. I have read no more than *Hadrian the Seventh*.

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It is dashing in its semi-learning. For a man who was rejected by the Church in which he saw his salvation, to hit upon the notion that he has, in proper fashion, been elected Pope and is sought out by the crowned heads of Europe is brilliant. And, at any rate in the early chapters, the book is ingeniously convincing in all its sardonic detail. Rolfe had an actor's detachment from his own character and played many parts with an effrontery which amounts to courage. The weakness of *Hadrian the Seventh* as a chronicle is that it eventually becomes a shrewd journalist's think piece. Still, as we know, the boldness of the fantasy is excellent pantomime. How far away we are from the sight of poor self-pitying Gissing turning out the blameless papers of Henry Ryecroft by the Ionian Sea, and mildly wishing he was a respectable ancient Greek, yet a writer far more diverse and full than Rolfe-Corvo ever was.

Jeremy Treglown

Pet Hates

Touring by PAGE EDWARDS JR *Marion Boyars* £4.95
Introduction 6 – Stories by New Writers *Faber* £3.95

There's one character with a good idea in *Touring*. Sam Hatch, editor of the *Peach Springs Times-Union* (circulation 2,400), thinks that the brashness of modern Peach Springs is truer to the old frontier town than the ethno-archaelogical construct that middle-class people like his nephew want to make of it. Accordingly, Sam, who some time ago discovered the well-preserved corpse of an Indian girl killed in a cave-dwelling fire *c.* 700 AD, has the twisted mummy ceremonially buried by the town's photogenic tame Redskins and replaced by a sexy replica with moving eyelids and lips that speak her own tape-recorded history.

Not to overstate matters, Sam's nephew Sullivan, home on a brief visit with his new wife, finds all this hard to take:

> Surprised by his own strong emotion, Sullivan, almost involuntarily, began a lament, a low groan, like a coyote crying at the moon . . . 'the plastic mold . . . creeping aluminium . . . bury the only remaining reality and replace her with a whore-doll you found in a catalogue!'

– and so on: his response a sublimation, perhaps, of his own self-disgust at discovering he still fancies Melody Lynn, childhood sex-object turned local whore-doll.

However understandable Sullivan's attitude to the vulgarity of Peach Springs, Uncle Sam has a point. What comes to life in *Touring* is the new, sprawling, appalling South Western resort, with its trailer camps and picnic sites and tourist-attracting gun battles faked by stuntmen. Any place that offers hip-lurching Melody Lynn *plus* the explosive El Moro bar ('GET DRUNK AS A BABOON/AT THE EL MORO SALOON')

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can't have gone that far wrong. And Page Edwards Jr records these features with excruciating fidelity – the coffeeshop hostess, for example, taking an order for scrambled eggs on toast with hash brown potatoes, orange juice, an English muffin, one black coffee and one tea:

> The waitress scribbled, quickly talking to herself, 'Adam and Eve on a raft, wreck 'em, with; o.j.; one English down; a black; and a China' – she looked enquiringly at Elizabeth – 'twist or cow?'
> 'Excuse me?'
> 'Lemon or milk?'

But despite his documentary skills, Edwards is predictably and ruinously on Sullivan's side, keen on time-journeys to unspoiled ghost towns and romantic mountain climbs, and hot on the remorselessly anthropological trail of quaint talkative oldsters like Pin Monatti the autobiographical barber, Wadsworth A. Pendelton the Master Numismatist, and anybody else who gives the author an excuse for another spell of word-mongering on overdrive. Sullivan himself is unrealised as a vehicle for his own impressions, and his New England wife Elizabeth would go similarly by default if Edwards didn't suddenly and rather implausibly turn her into a nude-bathing Lawrentian pentathlete in the closing pages.

The best that can be said for *Touring* is that there may be a short story in it trying to get out, which isn't true of everything in Faber's latest *Introduction*. There's some narrative meat in John Abulafia's 'Foolscap', an up-dated *Dr Faustus* crossed with a down-beat C. P. Snow tale of academic and scientific intrigue; but Abulafia's uncontrollably ambitious Edinburgh dons don't sound right, with their wide-open references to one another's 'hard, hard brains', to 'the distinguished atmosphere of Cambridge', to 'Whitfield, the fine Cambridge chemist' – and their proneness to solecism: 'I do not wish to impute his motives', 'popular success . . . his cachet to a professorship'. Thomas Healey offers some sharp vignettes of a slum childhood in Scotland and a navvying episode in the Highlands in January, but sacrifices some potentially effective realism for rather self-conscious Fine Writing. And Victor Kelleher comes out quite strongly with three stories about life in central and southern Africa – the best, partly because the least *moralisé*, is a densely structured piece about an African women's ignominious death.

Easily the most readable in this bunch, though, is Jim Crace. I had been toying with the idea of recommending 'Cruelty to Cats: a Modern Fictional Motif' as a thesis topic, so imagine my excitement on seeing that one of Crace's titles is 'Helter Skelter, Hang Sorrow, Care'll Kill a Cat'. Crace spreads his pet-hating net with appealing indiscriminateness – cats, dogs, chickens, all come in for a sly verbal kicking – but there's more to the gambit than simple taboo-busting, funny as that is in his hands. The narrator of 'Helter Skelter' associates the vulnerability of domestic pets with the enfeebling effect of marriage:

> Cats get lost all the time, marriages break up. We can't manage on our own, we domestics, we've been spoilt. Married people, kids, dogs, cats, pigeons, peacocks, ducks. It's all the same. We can't get away from it. Clipped wings.

It's a wry, surprisingly touching story about the breakdown and recovery of a marriage, and Crace has a real instinct both for the way a short story is shaped by its opening paragraph, even its opening words, and for how understatements and clichés can be used to make more telling points than a more ambitious style. Most convincing in these two stories, both previously published in the *New Review*, is Crace's command of distinctive and economical narrative voices. 'Annie, California Plates' is about a stolen car passed from hitch-hiker to hitch-hiker as it's driven for years across the United States and back again. The narrator is sharply individualised, and his inconsequential, very funny story comes across with a mixture of defeatism and generosity all its own.

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David Harsent

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The lamps of the terminal cases burn till dawn.

* * *

The last of the storm
trails into the morning's undertow.
'Up here there are no horizons; we sleep among clouds
or watch the nightsky, like renegades, for a signal.'

* * *

Ancient walls hold up under the weather, their granite roots
locked into the hillcrest; the city fathers are there
under chiselled slabs, serenely falling to pieces.
A century's corruption darkens the stonework.
Each evening, visitors' cars whine up that hill
kindling the crumpled windows, irrigating patterns of frost on iron.
Convalescents watch them hit the rise, headlight beams
toppling into the valley – then the whole sad convoy
cruising the outskirts . . . love in the guise of fear,
hands closing on one another, cut flowers staining their tissue.

* * *

' . . . it was long ago, too long to get things straight;
in another part of the country . . . and the people are gone.
So frail – I think my flesh could crumble,
flaking away from the bone like something cooked . . .
I only remember
the moments of deceit, that sudden shout of laughter
from the lawn outside my window; and later, the girl
coming into my room, white as a fish,
smoking with powder after her morning bath . . .'

* * *

The cloudless, endless blue begins to tear.
Instruments scald in their vats. The first drugs of the day are
soaking through.
Stars make soft explosions beyond the dampened glass, their
glimmer shrinks
back into space, a final rush of light
where the rim of the universe thrums like a wire in the wind.

* * *

Birds are thronging the undergrowth. Pale rods of sunlight
root among the groundsman's hothouse tulips.
In a shuttered room, an Italian orderly sings
as he washes the limbs of the new dead. Healers
with brain-cells in their fingertips
greet the day with knives . . . floodlights swamping the tile,
the blemished faces ebbing under gas.

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Music Books

Stanley Sadie

Little Big Man

Mozart: The Man – The Musician by ARTHUR HUTCHINGS *Thames & Hudson* £16.

Among writers on music, Arthur Hutchings is the prototype English eccentric. Nothing about this book is predictable, except its enthusiasm and its personal tone. But its principal unpredictable features have, I imagine, little to do with Professor Hutchings. For clearly it was planned as two separate books, which are here bound into one: *Mozart: The Man* (113 pages, with 70 black-and-white illustrations) and *Mozart: The Musician* (131 pages, with 80). The sections – this will cause nightmares for bibliographers and footnoters – are separately paginated and separately indexed.

That is not the only oddity. Within each half is bound a series of six eight-page 'pictorial essays', placed at the ends of most chapters, and again separately paginated (1-48 in each half). In 170 full-colour reproductions, of a richness and clarity exceptional even by Thames & Hudson standards, these give a graphic portrayal of Mozart and his times: there are pictures of him and his family, his employers, Salzburg, Vienna, contemporary travel, instruments, masonic paraphernalia, *Zauberflöte* settings and so on. It is much more beautiful but much less methodical than O. E. Deutsch's picture volume published by Bärenreiter in the New Mozart Edition. The 'pictorial essays' have their own text as well as detailed captions; Professor Hutchings is not its author.

The two halves of Hutchings's own text were not, I imagine, meant to be read together. If you read them together, you often read the same thing twice over: sometimes exactly the same things, often a précis of them, and just occasionally contradictory things – as when (*Man* p.27) all the movements in Mozart's early piano concerto arrangements were by four German composers working in Paris, or (*Musician* p.8, correctly) all but two of them were. The trouble is that, in order to discuss Mozart's works usefully the circumstances of his life have to be discussed too. Curiously, either half of this book is a whole – one a fairly detailed account of Mozart's life and personality, the other an outline of them sufficient as a basis for the musical discussion: but between them they add up to something less than that.

Still, this volume attempts what has never before been seriously attempted in English: an assessment of Mozart's psychology and personality and his relationship to the society around him. Hutchings brings to this a sharp and inquisitive, if rather easily distracted, mind. Mozart has traditionally been the subject of rose-tinted biographies: he lived and (more to the point) died at just the right moment for that. Hutchings is prepared to believe, for example, that father Leopold may not have been quite as grasping or crabbed as he is generally painted; that Archbishop Colloredo may not have been wholly culpable over the 1781 breach; that the musical patrons of Europe were not, to a man, deaf and stupid in their reluctance to employ this disorderly genius. Probably he could have gone further; a dash more of scepticism about early witnesses might have been beneficial. But he rightly gives much weight to Mozart's Mannheim-Paris trip of 1777-8, psychologically a crucial time, for those months saw Mozart's first serious love affair, his mother's death and his first separation from his father (which also means the first surviving correspondence).

Another special strength of the *Man* section lies in the fullness of the socio-historical and cultural background. Hutchings outlines the Mozart family's place in society and their view of that place – the Mozarts were snobs, and saw themselves as better than most musicians (mix only with noblemen, not with musicians, Leopold advised; 'be aloof, like an Englishman'). There is much that is to the point about their financial affairs. Some of it, however, is weakened by an apparent assumption that a composer received royalties, in those pre-copyright days, from sales of music or performances; and the suggestion that Mozart's excessive pride prevented him from negotiating with noblemen misses the point – the weight of the handout after a performance depended on whether the performance had pleased, and clearly could not be fixed beforehand. Hutchings writes understandingly of the Mozart couple's chronic financial difficulties, and discusses with particular percipience Mozart's relationship with his wife, Constanze. The account of Mozart as a man is less circumscribed by 20th-century attitudes than the material on his boyhood; parent-child relationships, and assumptions about what constitutes a good upbringing, have changed enough to make this hazardous ground.

On the music itself Hutchings talks in general rather than particular terms. Some of the background matter is too potted, and at the same time too rambling, to be helpful. Understandably, the operas fare best, not so much *Idomeneo* and *Così* – possibly Hutchings's favourites, but thinly treated – as the first two Da Ponte ones and *Zauberflöte*. On wit and characterisation he is specially observant. He is unfashionably depreciatory of *Tito*; I urge him to see the next Covent Garden revival. There are observant, refreshing things said on, for example, the string quintets and the

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piano concertos; but nearly all the discussion is on a general plane and only rarely does the particular character or achievement of any one work come over.

It is a pity that the book shows so little cognisance of recent Mozart scholarship. The 1964 edition of Köchel's catalogue is mentioned, once, but its chronology and other findings are largely ignored. So is the recent work on the autographs and authenticity of the early music; so is Bär's crucial 1966 book on Mozart's last illness, which was evidently not uraemia but rheumatic inflammatory fever – and the romantic notion of a storm at his funeral has long since been blown away in the light of the surviving Vienna weather reports. Here are a few typical points: 'academy' is not a pretentious name for a concert, but one reflecting the origin of concert-giving; Paolo and Stefano Mandini were two people, not one; the 'Boccherini' violin concerto on which Mozart allegedly drew is a forgery, composed in the 1930s; and the 'in the style of Handel' suite tells us nothing about Mozart's attitude to Handel as the title wasn't his. These are little points; but Hutchings is apt to use little points as bases for his excursions, and some now seem misdirected. And he is too discursive: do we need to be told once, let alone twice, in a Mozart book that the Eroica can readily be adapted for string quartet? Still, there are insights here, in plenty; and if anyone has earned the right to produce a self-indulgent book, it is surely Professor Hutchings.

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Peter Porter

You're the Top

Beethoven: A Victorian Tribute by PERCY M. YOUNG *Dobson* £5.00

There can never have been a triumph of art and reputation to equal Beethoven's. Even in his lifetime a legend and object of pilgrimage to Vienna, his posthumous fame has made him the best-known composer in the history of Western music. He has always stood for something more than just genius – for the victory of aspiration over circumstances, and for the need to struggle to achieve great art. Like his own music to *Egmont*, his life and death culminate in a triumphant *Siegesymphonie*. Yet he was by no means the first composer to live as a freelance – Handel and Mozart were more uncompromising in their independence. The dedications of Beethoven's works read like a page from the *Almanach de Gotha*. This may have been commonplace in his time, but Haydn could dedicate quartets to Johann Tost and Mozart to Haydn. Beethoven undoubtedly used his aristocrats in a way that Mozart never managed, but it is hard to avoid the feeling that he valued them more than Mozart did. Despite squalor and poverty in his life, Beethoven was always a huge 'success', and, after his death, the burgeoning German nationalism carried his fame ahead of it triumphantly. When we think of Bach and Mozart, we think of their music. With Beethoven, there is always something extra-musical in our minds. His music is as great as theirs, but it comes to us filtered through certain moral expectations. It is almost as if history were acting as his public relations agent.

Percy Young's short book is a reminder of how quickly Beethoven-idolatry set in. It is based on the journal kept by Sir George Smart, official British delegate to the Bonn Festival of 1845, when a statue of Beethoven was unveiled in his birthplace. Mr Young has set Sir George's own modest narrative in a much fuller commentary of his own. Indeed, although this Victorian tribute is always interesting, it is a pretty unashamed piece of book-making – there are only 100-odd pages and the filling-out includes daily cash accounts and facsimiles of Sir George's script. But the story is full of fascinating detail and the personages present include Queen Victoria and Albert, Liszt, Spohr and Moscheles. Mendelssohn is strangely absent.

In his introduction, Mr Young gives a short account of Smart's visit to Beethoven in Vienna in 1825. He was present when the Schuppanzigh quartet played the Op. 132 string quartet (Smart noted that the slow movement was 'most chromatic'), and received the correct timings of the movements of the Choral Symphony from the composer himself. In 1827, Smart was instrumental in arranging for the Royal Philharmonic Society in London to send Beethoven £100, which arrived a week before he died. Smart conducted several of Beethoven's Symphonies in London and much of his other music, and Mr Young points out that he carefully left records of how long each movement took in performance (unfortunately he does not say whether he observed repeats). It is difficult to read about junketings on the Rhine 20 years later without wishing that there was enough material from the Vienna visit to make a book.

Sir George's expedition took him by packet steamer to Ostend and then by train to Cologne. Much of his journal-keeping will interest collectors of early railway lore and experts on travel in Victorian Europe. Music lovers will be more frustrated than entertained, as Smart records the many concerts and functions and the leading musicians of Europe who took part in them. The presiding genius was Lizst, chief subscriber to the Festival fund, proposer of the specially built Beethoven concert hall (erected in the amazingly short time of 11 days) and composer of a festival cantata. Lizst, as always, was generous with his money and his time, but able to turn everything he did into publicity for himself. About halfway through the festival Victoria and Albert appear on the scene and Mr Young augments Smart's journal with excerpts from the Queen's diaries. She was still young and enjoying what was almost a honeymoon in dear Albert's own country, honouring his countrymen's noblest art. In Gotha she heard a cantata adapting some famous words for the occasion, *'Als Albion auf des Himmels Wort . . . Roll "Britannia, Britannia, roll" die Flut! Freiheit sey dein ew'ges Gut!'*

Smart has several disobliging things to say about German life, and a few about German trumpet players and choristers. He deserves to be read less for the musical insights in his writings, most of which fail to reach us across the intervening years, than in remembrance of his generosity to men of genius. He championed Beethoven, invited Weber to London to compose *Oberon*, performed the madrigals of Wilbye and even edited a volume of Orlando Gibbons. The statue of Beethoven can have looked down on no better musician at its unveiling.

Barrie Iliffe

The European

Delius: Portrait of a Cosmopolitan by CHRISTOPHER PALMER with a foreword by Eric Fenby *Duckworth* £9.80

Frederick Delius is widely regarded as an isolated figure among composers, who trod a solitary path and had few followers and fewer predecessors. This view of him seems to be supported by the absence from his music of any obvious derivation and by his unconcealed scorn for almost everything except his own music and the beauty of nature to which it paid homage. Furthermore, the popular image of him is that of

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the lonely, dying genius, imprisoned within his own blindness and paralysis – a tragic and highly romantic figure, seemingly consistent with the sadness and nostalgia of his music (but actually having little to do with the real Delius as he was when he wrote most of it). But no creative artist can exist in a total vacuum: and although many writers on Delius have made reference to the influence he derived from the music of the American negroes and from Grieg, nobody has until now made a serious attempt to place him in his true context and to trace his unique art to its real roots.

This gap has now been admirably filled by Christopher Palmer. In *Delius: Portrait of a Cosmopolitan* he identifies the widely varied influences which helped to shape the composer's development and examines them under five headings – America, Scandinavia, Germany, France and (significantly last) England. He considers Delius's work in relation to that of numerous other composers subject to the same influences (and of some upon whom Delius himself was an important influence) and exposes revealing comparisons and contrasts. The book is often digressive, and apart from some hitherto unpublished letters from Delius to his wife it contains little new documentary material. But it is full of original thought, its scholarship is beyond question and it is imbued with a deep love – not always uncritical – of its subject.

The book's declared object is to show Delius to be the cosmopolitan of the title. To describe as such a man who was born in England of German parents, who spent his most formative period in America, who studied in Germany, who lived most of his adult life in France and who regularly took his holidays in Norway, might seem rather to state the obvious. But the statement needed making, for the English persist, perversely, in regarding him as their own. They do so in the teeth of much evidence to the contrary. Not one of Delius's six operas has its setting in England, and of the four libretti Delius didn't write himself only one (*Koanga*) is by an English writer (C. F. Keary). Of the two plays for which he wrote incidental music neither is by an English author: he set English poets in only four of his 13 works for voice and orchestra and in only ten of his 62 songs, and of the 15 or so orchestral 'landscape' works, only two (*Brigg Fair* and *North Country Sketches*) have an identifiably English connotation. Finally, he consistently answered questions about his nationality by quoting Nietzsche – 'I am a good European'.

And yet there must be more to the feeling that Delius was English than mere national pride in a great artist born here, and there must be some reason why his music enjoys a following in England such as it enjoys nowhere else. Palmer passes this phenomenon by with scarcely a glance. He says in his preface that 'in classifying Delius as an exclusively English composer the English claim an unwarranted privilege': but instead of offering a view as to whether there is any reason (beyond the mere geographical accident of Delius's English birth) for the claim being made at all, he says later,

> I have no intention whatever of allowing myself to be caught in the peculiarly thorny thicket of Delius's Englishness; for in the last analysis it is all entirely a matter of subjective reaction.

All right, so it may be: but why is subjective reaction so much more sympathetic in England than anywhere else?

Perhaps it is that in Delius's musical language there is something very like that particular kind of sweet, misty melancholy which has characterised much English music from the Tudors up to late Romantics such as Bax and Ireland. Quite certainly this sad sweetness has been found cloying by many foreign ears, and the presence of something like it in Delius may well account largely for his failure to gain wider recognition abroad. But his roots in England were far too shallow for this particular quality in his music to be of authentically English origin; and what we fondly imagine we recognise in him as quintessentially English is probably no more than a curiously deceptive product of some complex chemical reaction between American and Scandinavian influences and a German romantic heritage. Christopher Palmer's book is discursive rather than documentary, and stimulates this and many other absorbing lines of conjecture. In that respect, as in all others, it is a very good book indeed.

Christopher Palmer

Blue-Eyed Boy

Percy Grainger by JOHN BIRD *Elek* £10.00

A few weeks ago in the *Observer* Stephen Walsh was commenting on the re-emergence over the last decade of the 'composer as personality', a trend which may account in part for the recent revival of interest in the subject of this portrait – which, let me say at once, is intensely realistic, comprehensive and illuminating and one with which the sitter, one imagines, would have been well enough pleased. Certainly as a personality, an *original*, Grainger aspired to – and maintained during the course of a long life – a virtuosity paralleled only by his world-renowned prowess as a concert pianist. But concert pianism, for Grainger, was never more than a means to an end: it simply provided him with the financial wherewithal he needed to pursue his career as composer, folksong collector, transcriber and arranger, musical ethnographer, editor, annotator, writer on music, teacher, experimental technician, and many other things besides.

In fact the absence of centralisation in Grainger's make-up was both his great strength and his great weakness. His life burnt so vividly and with an almost painfully sharp intensity at so many provincial centres simultaneously. His was a personality diffused, brilliant, restlessly versatile, utterly individual, sustained by an almost superhuman quota of energy both mental and physical. He was an accomplished linguist and confirmed racialist who, not content with collecting languages of Nordic-

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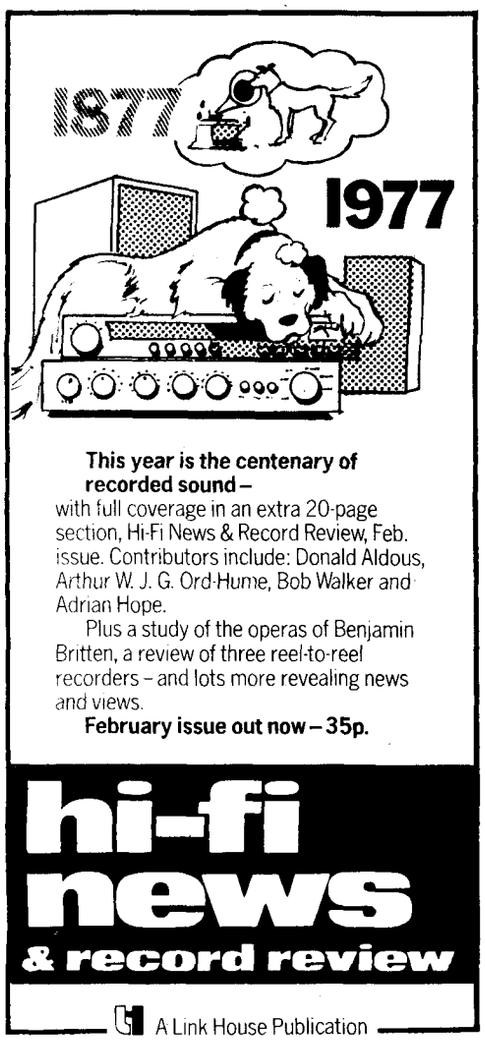
Celtic origin much as another man collects butterflies, even attempted to create one of his own (he dubbed it 'blue-eyed English'). His sense of positive identification with Scandinavian languages and cultures was almost uncanny; he was an avid reader of *Beowulf* and the Icelandic sagas, of J. P. Jacobsen, of Nietzsche, Whitman and others informed with a spirit of pioneer ruthlessness leavened by lyricism.

Grainger's own racy, chunky, sure-cast prose style, prodigal of coinages and 'blue-eyed' transliterations, is a joy to imbibe, and many examples from letters, articles and essays are incorporated in Mr Bird's narrative. Likewise the common denominator of all his many musical enthusiasms – Franck, Skryabin, Grieg, Delius, Gershwin, Rakhmaninov, the Dane Herman Sandby, the Swedish-American Howard Hanson – is the kind of poetic strength which revels in lyrical expression but remains untainted by sentimentality. Grainger's own output is shot through with the irresistible combination of sweetness and masculinity, *eau sauvage* and leather jackets: the elegaic tenderness of 'My Robin is to the Greenwood gone' is as typical and as unaffected as the barrack-room boisterousness of 'I'm Seventeen come Sunday'.

Grainger always sought the basic primacy of instinct and feeling; any music or literature in which the emotional impulse was stifled or at best relegated to a position of secondary importance was quickly cast by him into the outer darkness. And here we touch upon one of the mainsprings of his sensibility: for his obsession with personal beauty and bodily fortitude – he was a non-smoker, non-drinker, vegetarian and a virtuoso athlete – determined his fundamental approach to matters of art and life which was avowedly, unashamedly *physical*. He was an intensely physical, sensual person both as man and artist, and this is one of the aspects treated in Mr Bird's book with a refreshingly unself-conscious frankness. A quasi-incestuous mother-fixation left permanent scars: homosexuality was miraculously bypassed in favour of a regularly practised flagellism which was, it seems, the only means whereby Grainger could attain complete sexual fulfilment. The essential and reassuring point was that he harboured no guilt feelings about his own sexuality except in so far as it might endanger the well-being of others; but he felt that to refuse to give expression to cherished lusts and fantasies was irreparably to maim the personality and stunt its free creative development.

In the case of his own music the truest and most obvious issue of his sexuality was its all-pervasive *harmonic* orientation. Late 19th-century harmony, variously described as post-romantic, impressionistic, hyper-chromatic, decadent or (more explicitly) sensual or succulent, is one of the plainest manifestations of a strong sex-drive. Other factors in Grainger's music are allied to his quest for freedom, for complete naturalness of expression: a ceaseless craving for new colour-sensations in both vocal and instrumental terms (he advocated radical reforms in the constitution of the modern orchestra and, at a time when the young Schoenberg was still engaged on his sweepingly Wagnerian *Gurrelieder*, Grainger was employing proto-Schoenbergian wind sonorities in his *Hill Songs*, strange Dionysian creations full of the wild echoings and dyings of sounds on the heights). Melodic liberation: Grainger's scrupulousness in the notating and transcribing of folksong in various parts of the world revealed to him concepts of melodic structure and variation hitherto unbroached in traditional Western art-music. He was experimenting with irregular rhythms a whole decade before *Le Sacre du Printemps*, and evolving his own species of Delian chromatic harmony contemporaneously with but independently of Delius. In short, all the centrifugal tendencies of the age seemed to collect themselves in Grainger's musical persona, there to be given a decidely individual, if small-scale, impress.

Since credit for Grainger's innovations has naturally gone to other and greater composers who may or may not have been aware of his work, it would be well if we had more of Grainger's output available on records to remind us of the calibre of his achievements: I personally would give much for the magnificent *Green Bushes* passacaglia, the *English Dance* for orchestra and organ and other fine works large and small, all neglected in favour of yet another *Handel in the Strand*. Failing that, anyone seeking to palliate the gloom of a London February can scarcely do better than to turn to the Britten/Pears Decca anthology and to John Bird's biography. For my part, immersion in Grainger, whether in his life, his music or his prose, has never failed to leave me feeling mentally and even physically revitalised. He is like fresh winds blowing over the hills from the gates of the morning – a simile he would have appreciated, loving nature as he did with the impassioned ardour he bestowed on all his enthusiasms. He seems the product of some pristine, insouciant age less overshadowed than ours by complexities of thought and the inherited conscience of the centuries, an age when freedom – the quality he prized above all others – was there for the taking. As this book reveals, he was in many respects larger than life, like a Dickens caricature; but it has been well said that the alleged caricatures who people the Dickensian world are in fact the very steel of humanity, purged of its impurities and insignificances, evident, bright and shining.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Oliver Knussen

Grit

Havergal Brian: The Man and His Music by REGINALD NETTEL *Dobson* £7.50
Havergal Brian: The Making of a Composer by KENNETH EASTAUGH *Harrap* £10.00
Havergal Brian and The Performance of his Orchestral Music: A History and Source-book by LEWIS FOREMAN *Thames Publishing* £6.95

Four years after his death at the age of 96, the clouds of apathy and ignorance surrounding the music of Havergal Brian, our most prolific symphonist (a 'geriatric prodigy', as Brian's sterling advocate Dr Robert Simpson has put it), are beginning to disperse. To the interested bystander who has yet to be convinced, the appearance of three books on Brian in his centenary year is at once inspiring and depressing.

The splendid 1966 Albert Hall performance of the gigantic *Gothic Symphony*, which brought Brian's case to wide public attention, seems to have led both to the misconception that Brian's music is uniformly massive and to a surfeit of performances in what can most politely be termed bathroom acoustics. This grotesquely distorts Brian's mature musical speech, which is relatively economical, gritty, and plainspeaking to the point of awkwardness.

If one examines another long-neglected composer, Charles Ives, the anticipatory excitement of discovering a new byway along the course of musical history is rewarded with fresh experience, in that his best music is genuinely wild and exploratory, and at the same time relevant to the experience of a generation of people in a particular place. But one does not have to readjust one's perspective on the first half of this century to accommodate Brian; neither does he speak for a specific generation. His style is not radically different, but quietly personal, and thus unless some works attain real popularity he will remain a

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curio. Again, when investigating Ives's life, one can hardly fail to be stirred by the stands taken by a real free-thinker. Reading about Brian's life, on the other hand, provokes pity because he seems to have contributed in large measure to the sad state of affairs in which he found himself. We observe the pathetic spectacle of a man out of step with the realities of his time, seemingly driven by a demon both to create 'masterpieces' at the least apt moment (the *Gothic* was finished between the General Strike and the stock market crash, and the wild choral symphony called, whatever its subject matter, *Das Siegeslied*, was completed at the end of 1933!), and to do 'the wrong thing' on personal and social levels for whatever reason – e.g., the embarrassment of Elgar when Brian wrote to the *Musical Times* protesting Beecham's mutilated performance of the former's First Symphony in 1909. It should be borne in mind that Brian, coming as he did from a working-class background, was automatically 'inferior' to his more privileged fellow-musicians; nevertheless, one can't help feeling that he frequently earned the snubs he so often received.

Reginald Nettel was probably the first to espouse Brian's cause, in a book published in 1945, *Ordeal by Music*. The present volume is the 'amplification and continuation' of the earlier work, though Nettel stresses that it represents only a beginning. Nettel's modesty and sympathetic attitude inspire confidence in his book, which has the feel of an honest-to-goodness, old-fashioned biography; so much so that the sections on the music itself seem like an intrusion into the main narrative, and one is eager to get them out of the way. Nettel's winning quality is his sensitivity, and although there are no real plumbings-of-depths one is consistently impressed by his thoughtful conclusions, choice of illustrations and his attempt to place Brian in relation to his Midlands background and more specifically the Staffordshire of Arnold Bennett. But how poignant is the illustration of a card received by Brian during one of his lowest periods, when he was a desperate man: 'Dear Havergal Brian, I much regret your difficulties, but I shall not be able to help you. Yours sincerely Arnold Bennett.'

Kenneth Eastaugh's mis-named book (it has little to say about Brian as a composer) is more readable than Nettel's, but is concerned almost entirely with Brian's first marriage, of which his second family knew almost nothing until a son appeared at their door on the day of Brian's funeral. It also quotes interestingly from Brian's vast and often scatological correspondence with his lifelong supporter Granville Bantock. The story of the marriage is a truly appalling one, from which Brian emerges very badly: his extravagance, dictatorial attitudes and brutality to the family make grim reading indeed. One supposes that if Eastaugh was not convinced of Brian's merits as a composer he wouldn't have written the book, and the facts would have come out sooner or later (Brian scholars will probably be grateful for the research), but is now the best time for it to appear? Through page after page of depressing revelations, one looks in vain for the sort of insight into Brian's inner life which Nettel provides simply by recounting two extraordinary dreams which Brian mentioned in correspondence.

Lewis Foreman's copiously illustrated source-book is a work of scholarship and makes the most entertaining reading of these three tomes. Aside from revealing interesting details of Brian's performances prior to World War I (from which point began the neglect), Foreman clearly tabulates what works Brian heard when, thus enabling the reader to draw his own conclusions about the extent to which Brian's orchestral eccentricities stem from lack of contact with the realities of performance.

The three books taken together emphasise the gigantic debt owed by Brian-ites to Dr Robert Simpson at the BBC, whose determination has led to a huge percentage of the Brian performances tabulated in Foreman's book, and who is himself in danger of becoming another fine but neglected symphonist. For those whose fancy is tickled enough to want introduction to Brian's work, I would recommend purchase of the recording of symphonies 6, 10 and 16 and the Nettel biography, supplemented by Malcolm MacDonald's on-going book on the symphonies (Kahn & Averill), maddeningly biased but communicating real enthusiasm with irresistible verve.

Wilfrid Mellers

Well Baked

The Tender Tyrant: Nadia Boulanger by ALAN KENDALL *Macdonald & Jane's* £5.95
Music in the 1920s by RICHARD SHEAD *Duckworth* £5.95

Nadia Boulanger, 90 next September, has been making music for more than 70 years and teaching it almost as long. The composers she has instructed are legion; scarcely less significant, if less publicised, is the help she has given to performers. Her charismatic powers are not mysterious, or no more so than is life itself. As anyone who has attended her classes will know, her secret is that she emanates life and presents music as life auralised. She is a Believer, not merely in the tenets of her Church but in the gods that inspire men in art; and she insists on a rigorous approach to technical perfection because music-as-life merits fined limits – her purpose in inculcating rules since she believes (against the odds) in civilisation which can exist only within defined limits – her purpose in inculcating rules is to demonstrate that they're not arbitrary. For her, composing and performing music are inseparable activities; and all music is contemporary if it speaks to us, now. Boulanger's Monteverdi recordings of 1937 were one of a handful of musical experiences that, when I was a student, changed my life. We now know they were 'wrong'; even 40 years ago we knew that she shouldn't have used piano as continuo instrument! Yet it was these recordings, more

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than the necessary work of scholars, which re-established Monteverdi as a major composer, as contemporaneous with us as Nadia's idol, Stravinsky, and rather more so than her subsidiary luminary Fauré. Boulanger taught us that what makes music contemporary is not the date at which it was composed but the 'felt life' it incarnates. If it seems odd that music colleges should have been slow, even reluctant, to recognise this truism, we must remember that great teachers are no less rare than great artists.

Boulanger has not, however, been impervious to the vagaries of fashion. Inevitably, some of her swans turned out to be geese; and since her approach to music was based on the acoustics of the ear and the behaviour of the voice she found herself out of key with the proliferating growth of chromatic serialism. When Stravinsky himself in old age espoused a brand of Webernian dodecaphony, Nadia was in a tight corner: which she wriggled out of adroitly. Typically, however, she knew intimately the music she disapproved of, and disliked Schoenberg's technique because she disliked the caste of his mind; indeed she disapproved of Rakhmaninov for not entirely dissimilar reasons. That she was wrong on both counts is suggested by the facts that Schoenberg's music not only continues to arouse interest, but is also increasingly *heard*; and that Rakhmaninov's still ubiquitous piano concertos continue to move many people. Yet Boulanger was at least consistent, and her tastes weren't proscriptive. In 1919 she wrote:

> There are old and new things that we must love and defend, as there are old and new things that we must oppose. Let us therefore consider only our conscience, without worrying ourselves unduly about the judgments that the direction of our conscience will bring down upon us.

She has remained true to this in matters (all musical) that deeply concern her; that in more superficial affairs she has been often snobbish, sometimes foolish, and occasionally cruel testifies to a fallibility without which she'd be more – and also less – than human.

Since Boulanger's greatness does not consist in composed sounds or written words but in the evanescence of performance and human contacts, her quality is difficult to trap in a book. Such moments of insight as occur in Alan Kendall's rather trivial and inordinately expensive compilation are quotations from creative people taught by Nadia – especially the articulate Americans, Aaron Copland, Virgil Thomson, Roy Harris and David Diamond. Most of these quotations have appeared elsewhere; and the book is padded out with mini-biographies of Stravinsky, Fauré, d'Indy and anyone else peripherally relevant. Richard Shead's *Music in the 1920s* covers 'the world of the Boulangerie', as the current tag would have it. The author is on the mark in assessing which works matter most and so, at this date, he ought to be. The only personal slant he offers, however, is his appraisal of Weill and a refreshing tribute to Marc Blitzstein, who isn't a Twenties composer at all. This is insufficient compensation for the book's desultory structure and tired encapsulation of information. One can learn much more about the musical meaning of the Twenties by listening to a new recording of Poulenc's *Piano Concerto* and *Gloria*, elegantly performed by the CBSO Chorus and Orchestra under Frémaux. Somehow the direct echoes here of those two ultimate Boulanger masterpieces, Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms* and Fauré's *Requiem*, don't compromise Poulenc's integrity. I suspect Boulanger will enjoy this record as much as I do.

Mark Elder

Grazioso

Beecham Remembered by HUMPHREY PROCTER-GREGG *Duckworth* £5.95
Conversations with Conductors edited by Robert Chesterman *Robson Books* £4.50

Both these books are more in the nature of compilations than compositions, and in each the author maintains an appropriately low profile. Professor Procter-Gregg has created what is, in effect, a Beecham handbook, with a biographical sketch, a list of concerts, operas and recordings, Beecham's own tributes to Delius and Mozart, and a selection from his *obiter dicta* – among which the following is encouraging:

> Opera is the most highly-developed and complete form of art in music, and to sing in opera should be aim of every vocalist. All vocal performance should be dramatised, and opera should be the goal of every composer. And the utility of concerts should be to train audiences and all concerned for opera.

Procter-Gregg's has been a difficult task. How, after all, to anatomise a musical personality as compendious as Beecham's? A glance at his Festival Hall programmes reveals a staggering multiplicity of styles and periods, broader perhaps than many of us, even given a more adventurous musical public, would be prepared to tackle today. More fascinating than the predictably prominent Mozart, Haydn and Delius is the first of 'one-offs': rubbing shoulders with Dalayrac, Godard, Manfredini and Lord Berners are Mussorgsky, Schumann and Ravel, while alphabetically and interestingly sandwiched between Austin (Frederick, I suppose) and Barber is the name of Bach.

All of which more than hints at a conductor whose marked musical preferences went hand-in-hand with an extraordinary versatility, a constant preparedness to explore new or unfamiliar territory with a characteristic gusto and generosity. Though there was the odd lapse of taste (Neville Cardus wittily spiked his high-speed Wagner, and Tommy's own comments on performing his beloved Handel are nowadays more absurd than criminal) the sum of the achievement, in terms of sheer diversity matching success and professionalism, remains unrivalled.

In the Covent Garden pit alone he was an indefatigable presence, making the seasons distinctively his own in an eclecticism which today's shrinking budgets defy. The first, in 1910, included Strauss's *Feuersnot*, Debussy's *L'Enfant Prodigue*, Sullivan's *Ivanhoe* and Ethel Smythe's *The Wreckers* – what price such fare in Bow Street now? There was his continuing championship of Strauss (a guest conductor in 1910), his lifelong advocacy of Sibelius, and his determined commitment towards introducing Delius to English audiences.

Besides the boldly dogmatic Mozart lecture and enterprising programme notes on Elizabethan madrigals, Procter-Gregg has assembled a superb anthology of personal reminiscences. Beecham stories have made him something of a folk hero, and here we range from the French musician muttering *C'est un dieu, c'est un dieu,* through Douglas Steele's hair-raising interview as fledgling secretary –

> You must ask Miss O'Donnell where my little alpaca jacket is, which you must always lay on my desk in the mornings . . . When you have looked after these requirements, I want you to catalogue my library

– to his instructions to Lionel Tertis apropos an orchestral viola section: 'My dear follow, do what you like with them – *boil* them, if you like!'

At least three interviewers have been at work on Mr Chesterman's conductors, and the quality and range of their questions varies inevitably: one is not, perhaps, emboldened by a conversation with Bruno Walter which begins 'Dr Walter, you have a lovely place here in Beverly Hills' (though Walter plays up nicely by talking about 'the *allegretto grazioso* of Beverly Hills) or by some forbidding verbosity at the start of Glenn Gould's encounter with Stokowski. These two, indeed, make duller reading than the others – Walter is vague and a bit sententious, and Stokowski has precious little to say about conducting.

I find the other four far more absorbing in their detailed recollections of performance and in the sense they communicate of conducting traditions and styles. Perhaps it is better that what goes on between baton and players should remain inexpressible, but Bernstein on Reiner's unique relationship with his orchestra (a down-beat at the opening of *Don Juan*!) or Klemperer on Mahler's finishing rehearsal touches to the 8th give fascinating insights, as does comparing the latter's lukewarm praise of Nikisch with Boult's concentrated analysis of his technique, and his statement that Boulez is the only man in the world who is a real conductor. The collection was an excellent idea, more perhaps for the musician than the music lover, and Mr Chesterman's most illuminating introduction makes us regret that his book has had to be such a slim one.

Among this week's contributors:

STANLEY SADIE is the editor of the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* and has published books on Handel and Mozart.

OLIVER KNUSSEN's compositions include three symphonies. His new *Autumnal* for violin and piano will be performed at the Purcell Room on 20 February.

MARK ELDER is a staff conductor with the English National Opera at the Coliseum. He is at present conducting *Il Trovatore* and *Der Rosenkavalier*.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Benedict Nightingale

Liftoff

The Wedding Feast *Leeds Playhouse*
Troilus and Cressida *Roundhouse*

In my personal dictionary, the one-time author of *Roots* and *Chips with Everything* has been progressively less flatteringly featured:

> **Wesker** (*v*, *intrans*). Waffle; wear heart on sleeve and leave head at home; become maudlin, usu. abt utopian socialism; indulge in nostalgia; lose sense of humour, esp. when love, manual labour or William Morris is involved; preach, sermonise, pontificate; become boring without knowing it or caring very much. *HENCE, prvbs*: he who weskers with friends in the morning will wesker alone after noon; when the cat goes a-weskering, 'tis stoppard for the mice; etc.

So when I was sent a script of *The Wedding Feast*, some three or four years ago, I sat down pretty gloomily, expecting to spend the next few hours doddering intermittently off to make cups of coffee or suddenly remembering unmissable appointments. But it wasn't like that at all. On the contrary, I didn't shuffle a buttock until I had reached the last page, so lavish was the play with precisely those qualities we'd lately missed in Wesker: mental rigour, wit, humour, contemporary point, dramatic tension, the power to seize the attention and not let go until its will is done. It had, I decided, to be produced at once; and I still think it is a sad judgment on our laggardly theatre that no English company was prepared to do it for the two years between its composition and its premiere in Sweden or for the three years between that showing and its exhumation in Leeds.

But now at last we have it, and, by coincidence, at a very apt time, just when Bullock is proposing to give a little more power to those who toil and moil at the machines and a little less to those who sit and plan upstairs. It is, however, a discomforting piece of evidence Wesker would plant in the committee's files, not one to please those who expect a speedy reconciliation between the two sides of industry. To begin with, he postulates an unusually open-handed employer: Louis Litvanov, son of an immigrant cobbler, and still mindful of his peasant origins now he runs his own shoe factory in Norwich. Every demand the men make he promptly fulfils, whether it's for higher wages, a mandatory bonus irrespective of profits, institutionalised feather-bedding, time off to play football, or money in lieu of the big Christmas thrash he likes to throw for the wives and children. When fellow-members of the boss class demur, he explains that it's his elementary duty to care for his friends on the factory floor, to understand how monotonous their work is, and to compensate them for it: 'I love my workers and they love me.' And if popularity could be bought with enlightened paternalism, popular he certainly would be.

But as Emerson remarked in a famous denunciation of philanthropy, no one forgives givers: 'the hand that feeds us is always in some danger of being bitten.' When Louis barges uninvited into a worker's wedding party, his welcome is no warmer for the champagne he insists on buying for the luckless couple. The atmosphere, already uneasy, simply gets more so. After all, who can behave 'as if I'm not here' when the speaker fits into the company about as happily as Banquo's ghost? Some do their best to be pleasant to him, one or two become ingratiating, one insulting: no one is natural or comfortable, least of all Litvanov himself, who proceeds to brag about his common touch, only to bridle angrily when strangers innocently call him by his factory nickname, 'Liftoff'. Meanwhile, the free-flowing booze is eroding inhibitions and releasing resentments. Louis blunders into a local version of pig-in-the-middle, which consists of playfully applying a shoe to the bottom of a blindfolded guest, and, before he has properly understood the rules, he is being belaboured with his own products by his rampaging employees. 'I came to show you I was human,' he wails drunkenly; but he isn't, not to them, and he can never be so long as he's in control of their lives.

The big fault of John Harrison's production, so steady and sensible when sense and steadiness are needed, is that this climatic humiliation lacks savagery. What should, surely, be an explosion of vindictive rage splutters into an out-of-hand school rag, with a gang of over-excited juniors gleefully twitting an overwrought prefect with wet towels. Besides this, one's other objections seem slight, little more than that the play sometimes betrays its origins, a short story by Dostoevsky. For instance, the fear with which the young bridegroom reacts to Litvanov's materialisation is more appropriate to the Russia of the 1890s than to the Britain of the 1970s. A boss already so in thrall to his shop stewards is not, after all, likely to fire a worker if he fails to enjoy himself at the private party he's crashed. Again, it's perhaps a pity that a minor character has to be promoted into a narrator for the first act and first act only – all editorial wink and knowing nudge as Litvanov's personality and history are described ('*stubborn* is an admirable way to describe our hero') and projections of his house and factory flash on and off a screen at the back of the stage.

But to convey the same information naturalistically would probably be as cumbersome and more time-consuming. In any case, smoothness of style and tone doesn't seem to me as great a virtue as it is reckoned by my more pernickety colleagues. What matters is that in all essentials of content, thought and feeling Dostoevsky has been successfully transformed into Wesker, and not the mushy, woozy Wesker of *The Friends* and *The Old Ones*, but a wide-awake Wesker whose existence we'd all but forgotten. Some of his Norfolk characters might have vaulted across two decades from *Roots*, their quiddities intact: for instance, the bride's mother, forever moaning about the inhospitality of her son-in-law's relations and the thinness of the guest-list. Wesker handles them all capably, the nicer ones unsentimentally, the less nice not unsympathetically. As working people, they seem sufficiently real and representative to take part in what is, I suppose, intended as a case-study of industrial estrangement and class discord, with some aptness beyond Norwich and its shoe-hatcheries.

The doubt involves Litvanov. Can this tactless, insecure, well-meaning loudmouth, played by David Swift in a strangulated screech, really stand for anything except himself? I don't see why not. General ideas mean nothing if they're not deduced from plausible individuals, even though they may to some extent be limited by them. And there's much that's familiar about Litvanov. Versions of him are to be found all over England, queuing in the works canteen in order to show how 'democratic' they are, inviting their employees to call them by their Christian names, appointing a token worker to the company board, or, as Louis actually does, leaving the Rolls at home and clattering up to the factory gates in a rusty Ford. But a beekeeper who puts on a yellow-and-black striped vest doesn't thereby become a bee himself. No more does he surrender control of the hive, its workers, the honey and the profits. What Wesker's play suggests is that no gesture of reconciliation, however benign, will persuade the subject classes that they belong to 'one nation', that their social and economic interests are identical to those of their masters, or that we should all 'pull together' for reasons of gratitude, good-fellowship or anything else. Lions don't easily lie down with lambs, nor lambs with Litvanovs; and genuine cooperation will come only when genuine power is genuinely shared.

The acting is remarkably consistent: Fiona Walker, a bit understretched as a marxist miss; Brett Usher, Nigel Gregory, Maryann Turner; David Troughton, all hulking, inarticulate fluster as the wretched bridegroom. Nothing, I must add, is consistent about Ronald Hayman's revival of *Troilus* except its perversity. An unwieldy script only gets more so if you cast women as men and men as women – and what is gained? Perhaps it's intended as a variation on the birth-control ad that showed a pregnant male: what would *you* feel like if you were Cressida or Helen, in absolute subjection to the will of female Agamemnons and Priams? Or perhaps it's just a way of giving the girls a chance to play fat, improbable parts. All it proves is that when actors and actresses have to devote their energy to establishing what they're used to taking for granted, namely a sexual identity, there's precious little left for subtleties of interpretation. A scurvy evening.

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Jazz

Charles Fox

What a Lark

Cleo & John by GRAHAM COLLIER *Quartet* £4.95
Cleo Laine and John Dankworth 'A Lover and his Lass' *Esquire ESQ301* £3.35
Cleo Laine and John Williams 'Best Friends' *RCA RS1094* £3.49
Ray Charles/Cleo Laine 'Porgy and Bess' *London D31D2* (2 LPs) £6.50

In 1939 Rodgers and Hart came up with a song called 'I Like To Recognise The Tune'. It told only half of the truth. What many of us were equally keen on then was being able to understand the words as well, no matter whether these were trite or, like Lorenz Hart's, a foray into minor poetry. Singing, we felt, should veer closer to speech than the trilling of operatic divas. It was not simply a matter of diction but of treating a lyric as if it told a story. And the microphone – and a breed of popular singers who knew how to use it – had helped to bring that about.

Cleo Laine fits within that new tradition. Her scope has broadened to embrace tussles with *Pierrot Lunaire* (by all accounts the microphone got the upper hand for once) and Hugo Wolf as well as Fats Waller, but her style was founded on 'standards', those one-time pop songs that refuse to die. Perhaps she was lucky to start off as the singer with John (then Johnny) Dankworth's orchestra. Lita Roza, she recalls, was with Ted Heath, much more famous, but 'singing the crap of the day – "How Much Is That Doggie In The Window" – and I was singing things like "Cry Me A River" and "The Lady Is A Tramp".'

Singers with that orchestra, and its predecessor, the Dankworth Seven, both out-and-out musicians' bands, had to know their place, providing distraction between the instrumental numbers. Those musicians insisted that Cleo listen to records by Charlie Parker and other jazz heroes, so that bit by bit her technique – and her range – expanded. However much she may deny it, Cleo Laine's first allegiance is to the peculiar disciplines of jazz. That commitment can take different forms: Billie Holiday translated everything she sang, virtually recomposing her material; Cleo's method has often been a matter of phrasing or timing, comparable to the way Louis Armstrong or Ben Webster could play a tune almost dead straight, yet by tiny deviations turn it into a personal statement.

Cleo's ability to do this – and to swing – is demonstrated on her half of the Esquire LP (the other half is by the original Dankworth Seven), the first recording made under her own name. She was already – in 1955 – a very individual performer, helped in this (as she still is) by an insistence on keeping her accent English. (The songs were all British too: 'Mad About The Boy'; one of Arthur Young's Shakespearean settings; even that neglected little treasure, Ord Hamilton's 'You're Blasé'.)

Graham Collier's book about the Dankworths is short on human detail (they come across like guests on a TV chat show rather than real people) but strong on critical judgments. Which is understandable; after all, Collier is a composer and bandleader himself. Yet a lesser man, given the run of the Wavendon archives and the prospect of a hero-worshipping readership, might have flirted with at least some token sycophancy. In fact, Collier is remarkably honest, passing on his misgivings about John's dabbling in Third Stream, that halfway house between jazz and straight music, as well as the wisdom of keeping Cleo's repertoire perpetually up-to-the-minute.

John Dankworth's busy years were the Sixties, full of film and TV commissions but also producing a set of suites (the soloists in *The Zodiac Variations* were picked for their birthdays as well as their prowess). Cleo's conquests began in the Seventies with triumphs in Australia and the US after years of being taken for granted in her homeland ('The only time a British audience stands', her husband says, 'is when there's a mouse in the place'). Along with this went a shift in the type of songs she performed, an emphasis upon much newer material, the kind of things to be found in *Best Friends*, a collaboration with the guitarist, John Williams. The more recent 'standards' – 'Eleanor Rigby', Jobim's 'Wave' and 'Killing Me Softly With His Song' by C. Fox (no relation) and N. Gimbel – come off well, but several of the other pieces are wispy, the words (including some by Cleo herself) more interesting than the melodies.

Cleo Laine's experiences in the theatre, suggests Collier, as an actress as well as a singer, may have been crucial to her development. More obvious kinds of theatricality – too many gestures, those swoops from low contralto up to 'an Yma Sumac "super G" above high C' – are balanced by her increased understanding of the dramatic reverberations of a song, its place in a larger context. Which may be why, as far as Cleo is concerned, the *Porgy and Bess* album must be accounted a little masterpiece. The treatment stresses the vernacular rather than the operatic, vast liberties get taken with scoring and style, yet the final effect is of authenticity.

Ray Charles jettisons most of his mannerisms and that self-pitying stance which flawed much of his earlier work. His piano playing is as fine as any he has put on record for years. Yet he never immerses himself in the songs as Cleo Laine does. There are flaws: her voice seems even huskier than usual ('I haven't got the pure sound you need for opera,' she once declared, 'Pneumonia . . . left me with a bronchial quality'). But those rough edges underline the humanity of her interpretation. That anonymous critic, quoted by Collier, much worried by the concessions to show biz and doubtful if Cleo can even move him to tears, should listen to 'They Pass By Singin' or the superb rejoinder in 'Bess, You Is My Woman Now'. Words and music have for once met the ideal singer.

We are sad to announce the death on 23 January in Oxford of Melaan Bunting who was for many years a much loved and valued member of our staff.

Films

John Coleman

2 or 3 Things

Number Two *The Other Cinema*
Vanessa *Classics Moulin, Praed Street and Victoria*
White Rock and Genesis *ABC 1, Shaftesbury Avenue from 1 February*

Just when it seemed that Jean-Luc Godard had finally shot his bolt, up comes *Number Two* to prove as much, at least to my satisfaction. A little background is in order here. From 1968 to 1973, Godard made nine films – sometimes alone, sometimes in collaboration with Jean-Pierre Gorin – which were to be concrete, political, activist: most of them flew under the banner of the Dziga-Vertov collective. In the autumn of '72 Godard and Gorin took both *Tout va bien* and *Letter to Jane* on a tour of American campuses: dialogue between audience and creator was directly invited. The following year the Dziga-Vertov group was no more. Godard moved back to Paris and set up a film and videotape 'laboratory' near Place Pigalle, experimenting on a film/tape called *Moil/Je* and trying to set up a bigger project entitled *The Decline of the Dollar*. In '75, claiming to find the pressures of the metropolis stifling, he shifted again to Grenoble where, in the spring, he shot another film/tape *Numéro 2* (*A bout de souffle*), or *Number Two* (*Breathless*). It is this, shorn of its reference to his very first film, that the Other Cinema is now bravely mounting. And it is probably true to say, as others have suggested, that we have to go back to 1965 and his *2 ou 3 choses que je sais d'elle* (*Two or Three Things I Know About Her*) to discover a work of similar socio-political considerations in the anaemic body of his oeuvre.

Unlike the infuriatingly null *Le Gai Savoir*, the newish film readily yields up a few bromides. Industrialisation leads to the inevitable death of personal (and notably male-female) relationships. Man still sees woman as an object. We are prisoners of the bourgeois media, cinema and TV in particular. These humming insights are communicated via three generations of a family: the wife Sandrine (Sandrine Battistella) is badly constipated and sexually unsatisfied, the husband Pierre (Pierre Oudry) – although shown effecting a rear entry to the accompaniment of a feeble pun – barely rousable. Sandrine fiddles with him ineffectually now and again and at one point mum and dad are witnessed in the buff giving a confusing sex-talk to their little kids. Grandpa has two wandering monologues, during one of which he devotes some attention to his own genitals, and grandma is caught soaping her chest in a mirror as well as doing domestic chores. Tiny Vanessa asks mum if all little girls have holes, adding the cute supplementary: 'Is that where memories come from?' As I recall, mum says yes. Someone is pitifully

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confused. But what, you may well be snarling by now, is the story about? The answer to that is there is no story.

Godard has chosen to present a clutch of fragmented episodes in this family's life in the most devious way possible, via one or two TV screens intermittently issuing images, the occasional superimposition of Sandrine's face in negative close-up over such or similar images, the whole affair bracketed by a couple of pontifical, prosing appearances by Jean-Luc himself. Sometimes the Mondrian-like rectangles against a black background will show head-on and profile action portraits of the same speaker or performer, at other times conflicting or unrelated images share the screen, even overlapping one another. In this way does Godard continue to vanish up the orifice of his presumed intentions. For all the printed-out puns (not 'jokes', as the subtitles once have it), of which SON in its two senses of 'his' and 'sound' is as typical and ineffectual as any. *Number Two* is as close to self-indulgent aestheticism as you can get, an obfuscation of two or three things its director knows about Life.

With perverse relief, one turns to the appallingly silly *Vanessa*, or how our heroine, an heiress, goes straight from perusing a volume called *Eroticism in Pompeii* at her steamy convent school to the fleshpots of Hong Kong. 'Wow, Vanessa, where'd you get that bust?' inquires an enthusiastic new girlfriend as the lovely Olivia Pascal takes the first of many baths. Anton Diffring is to hand as a neighbourhood sadist (*vive le* Diffring?), foiled in his attempts to hot the child up with opium and fresh monkey-brains, HURE is scrawled in lipstick on a looking glass (the German for 'whore', so presumably the blissful dubbing replaces more guttural stuff), the close finds Vanessa – fumbled but not broached – playing it cool for the sequel.

White Rock, produced by Michael Samuelson and directed by Tony Maylam, is a finely photographed, highly personal 76-minute record of the XIIth Winter Olympic Games, packing in some exhilarating footage of ski-jumping, ice hockey, bobsleigh, luge, the biathlon, skating of all kinds and James Coburn. This introduction of Coburn, a few manly phrases apart ('and once he starts his run, there ain't no turnin' back'), proves inspired: he doesn't just commentate but participates vigorously as well. Maylam and Samuelson also collaborated on *Genesis*, 45 minutes of a pop group in action with some pointless filmed cut-ins, a girl on a beach, planes, bombs, that old mushroom cloud. The songs may be great but I couldn't hear a word against the electronic twangling. Speakers in the auditorium applauded for me: just as well.

Ballet

Oleg Kerensky

Family Parties

The Nutcracker *Festival Hall and Opera House, Manchester, 28 February-5 March*
Northern Dance Theatre *Manchester*

Ronald Hynd's new production of *The Nutcracker* for Festival Ballet is neither as dramatic and emotional as he intended nor as muddled and ugly as it first seemed. Having seen it four times, I've come to find it acceptable entertainment, if you don't take Hynd's new story-line too seriously – and if you don't compare the choreography with other versions. Nureyev's production for the Royal Ballet is more interesting, and naturally more spectacular, Ben Stevenson's for Ballet International far more accessible.

Like Stevenson, Hynd has opted for a modest Christmas party, taking place in a reception room which seems to combine the father's study and the house boiler and which the family have to clear themselves by pushing the furniture around. Frau Stahlbaum, the hostess at the party, is amusingly played by Margot Miklosy – an ambitious social climber forever trying on ear-rings, casting a disapproving eye at the eccentric Drosselmeyer and pushing her daughter at the rich hussar. But Hynd's romantic inventions are too complex and confusing. There are two sisters, one of whom is in love with Karl, Drosselmeyer's nephew, while the other is in love with sweets. Both of them are played by grown-up ballerinas, so that there is no very obvious age difference.

The grown-ups at the party behave so badly that it's not surprising that many of the children are little monsters. Frau Stahlbaum snatches the bouquet Karl gives her daughter and throws it down, the hussar grabs a fancy turban produced by Drosselmeyer and insists on wearing it, and Karl practically fights the hussar in the middle of the party. As in so many productions, little Clara watches the divertissements from behind, but later she joins in some of them. Very oddly, she is led off the stage by Drosselmeyer just when the big pas de deux begins (strange that she is not allowed to watch her sister dance). The finale consists of the sisters waking up together on a couch, joined by their mother who gives the elder one back her bouquet, thus presumably accepting her desire to marry the nice boy, rather than the rich one.

Apart from Miklosy, the best single performance came from Nicholas Johnson as Fritz, the Stahlbaum's young son. He looked convincingly boyish, and did a very jaunty and precise hornpipe. All the ballerinas were handicapped by Hynd's ugly new choreography for the Sugar Plum variation, but Patricia Ruanne was charming and stylish, Manola Asensio seductive and charismatic.

Northern Dance Theatre's Christmas programme was far too bitty – seven items – but included André Prokovsky's very charming and lyrical Beethoven *Bagatelles* and Alan Carter's *The Catch*, a folksy piece originally made for the old Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet. Robert de Warren, the company's new director, is obviously going to have to find a meatier repertoire and a few star dancers very quickly.

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Television

Ian Hamilton

Mod Coms

Chancellor Schmidt blew his nose on *News at Ten*, thus swamping one of our Foreign Secretary's more low-slung parentheses, and Mike Yarwood – impersonating Michael Parkinson – picked his in front of Harold Wilson. All told, a pretty snotty week, and when it wasn't snotty it was just a little potty – *People to People* (BBC-2) spent almost an hour on Sunday night grilling old persons about 'the problems of' incontinence. Simpering host Brian Trueman (hugely proud to be ventilating this taboo topic) let us into a new way to wet our pants in peace – a positively cavernous pair of knickers into which you can offload whenever the whim takes you and empty afterwards, in private. The assembled oldies rightly looked a bit daunted by these mod coms but Trueman's brisk air implied that he'd have the lot of them togged out before the night was done.

Other aspects of old age were perfunctorily discussed by 'experts' and by actual sufferers, and absurd little playlets were enacted to underscore points made. Luckily, the resident dramatist didn't stretch his gifts too far, so we never actually got to see anyone caught short, but there was some strong stuff depicting ancient types taking nose-dives down the stairs, falling out of bed, etc. In each play, the prostrate pensioner would be helped to her feet by the Professor of Geriatric Medicine at the University of Glasgow, breathing compassion and advice, so one didn't feel too broken up on her behalf. Nor indeed on behalf of the studio audience; immensely old, perhaps, but showing equally immense restraint in the face of the young puppy Trueman's dripping importunities. It was he chiefly who gave the show that amateurish look that made one wonder if it came from Manchester (it did) – he couldn't stand still, his questions were too vague and repetitive, his style fluctuated from the jaunty to the troubled, and he used the word 'problem' as a kind of punctuation mark throughout. He should be sent back to head and shoulders instantly.

Yarwood's nose-pick was not the only highlight of a Saturday night almost entirely given over to his talents. *Yarwood in Persons* (BBC-1) was followed by an appearance on *Parkinson*, where he was joined by his assistant Harold Wilson. Parkinson (who claims that he doesn't pick his nose) was a good deal more disconcerted than Sir Harold by the impersonator's antics and must be getting a bit fed up with each week having to take more and more things in good part; one day, I fear, he'll crack and round horribly on his tormentors. As for Sir Harold, he came out of it quite well. He'd evidently decided to cut down on the admiring chortles with which he used to respond to Yarwood's travesties of his deceitfulness, pomposity, vanity and so on. Instead, the aim seemed to be for mild amusement at the man's technical skills but good-humoured reservations about the quality of his characterisation. It worked admirably, and at one point Sir Harold was even emboldened to attempt some modest self-parody.

Last week I finally managed to get down on my knees before Lew Grade's great God spectacular, and – all right – it was filmed in the real wilderness and used real Israelites, and yes I know how much it cost, and about Burt Lancaster and Anthony Burgess and everything. But even so I wasn't quite prepared for anything so turgidly single-paced and dull. Even God himself doesn't move this slowly. 'Lord I am slow of speech,' says Moses to the burning bush; big G (played here, I think, by the dark brown voice of big Jim Reeves) could instantly see that he'd have no trouble getting this dim schmuck to do anything he told him, and hired him on the spot. The rest is history, and has ten weeks to run.

Charlie's Angels (Thames) is hard to take, but I've taken it twice now and if I give it a mention perhaps you won't mind if I don't watch it any more. It has been described, I'm told, as Women's Lib's answer to *Starsky and Hutch*, but that's nonsense; the three girl tecs (each made of lightly suntanned chromium plus teeth) are often, it is true, commissioned to reduce some hulking stud to jelly, and their male adversaries are always oafish bunglers, but not for nothing is the show produced by one Rick Husky. All the orders come from the mastermind of Charlie himself; the girls never get to see Charlie but we are now and then given a glimpse of him telephoning his instructions from a couch or from beside a pool, surrounded by nubile, laughing handmaidens. Although he doesn't seem to fancy his sleuths, he does sometimes titillate them with a coy reference to the good times he's handing out. They giggle contentedly when he does this and then instantly wiggle off to bust dope rings for him. The clear hint is that if they unman sufficient villains, Charlie may well, who knows, let them press a shirt or two some day.

Coming in at the last episode of BBC-2's three-part series, *A Slight Case of Poison*, I found it hard to imagine how the first two had occupied themselves. The subject of the series was the Durham poisoner Mary Ann Cotton, and I can't imagine anyone wanting to know more about her than was reported in this single show. We were told how she'd knocked off three husbands, one lover, one mother, and 13 children; all 18 had died of arsenic poisoning. From the death cell she protested her innocence in long, repetitive letters to friends, and these were read out to us; we saw a few of her victims in their death throes; we attended the trial; we witnessed the execution. More than enough for me, but on top of it we were asked to involve ourselves in a debate about her 'guilt or innocence' between the actress who portrayed her and the author of the book about her on which the series had been based. The actress, Kathleen Brandon, had so 'identified herself' with the role that she'd decided that poor Mary Ann had been unfairly topped. Expounding this delicate theory with much zest, Miss Brandon was taken aback to be asked 'But what about the arsenic?'; 'Yes, well, the arsenic does present a problem – one can't dismiss the arsenic. Perhaps she was using it as a medicine.' Apparently they did in those days, and Mary Ann just got unlucky 18 times. Nineteen, to be exact.

Julian Barnes

Comic Cuts

Bunter is dead: to begin with. There is no doubt whatever about that. He died on 16 October, at the age of 68, in the collision between *Valiant* and its IPC stablemate *Battle*; and is survived, rather unexpectedly, by his twin Bessie, the fat centrespread of *Tammy*. The death of Bunter is particularly significant, since he took the brunt of Orwell's attack in the essay on Boys' Weeklies; but it is not the only one. *Eagle* has gone, bearing with it Harris Tweed, Dan Dare, and the Mekon on his flying lav; similarly *Girl* and *Robin*, *Rover*, *Adventure*, *Children's Newspaper*, *Young Elizabethan*, *Princess* and many more. *Tiger* is still here (amalgamated with *Scorcher* and spawned, in its turn, *Roy of the Rovers*); but where is *Lion*, its brother of the rack? Market laws rule, and in a competitive field of some 50 British weekly children's mags, unsentimental transplants are regular occurences. A comic only has to drift downwards in sales for it to be ripped open by IPC or D. C. Thomson, gutted of its best stories, and sewn up again with some similarly ailing stablemate: hence *Whizzer* and *Chips*, *Buster* and *Monster Fun*, *Jinty* and *Lindy*. *Shoot* whimsically includes *Goal*.

For a middle-class child of the Fifties, a survey of the comics field today reveals a vast amount of mythic wreckage, and confirms one's grouchy suspicions about the kids of today. They are, after all, the sort of kids who reckon that a stuffed tracksuit and a paper bag constitute a guy; who ring the bell *before* starting their carols, and then consider that four lines of each of 'We Wish You a Merry Christmas' and 'Figgy Pudding' is worth a minimum of 10p, not negotiable. You wouldn't expect them to care for the solid old characters of comics. Quick returns is what they're after. Ironically, quick returns is what they get, since most stories are regularly recycled by the publishers 'to keep costs down'.

Though kids today have far more comics to choose from than 20 years ago (the British ones are augmented by a range of flayed-flesh Marvel mags), the variety of material has probably diminished. The whole top end of the market has been wiped out. There is nothing openly educative, nothing unreflectingly middle-class (though occasional comebacks are attempted, as by the North Oxford-ish *Cricket and Company*, at 50p); and even the did-you-know pages, about the height of white ants' nests and the brake horse power of the anaconda, have shrunk. The other significant difference

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is the death of the prose story. My own addiction until shamefully late into my teens was to a group of four mags, *Rover*, *Adventure*, *Wizard* and *Hotspur*: each featured half a dozen action serials per week, and could be made to last several hours. Little did I realise then, as I nail-bit my way through cliffhangers about steeplejack footballers, footballing soldiers, and soldiering steeplejacks, that this was comicland's equivalent of *Le Monde*. The first two have folded; *Hotspur* and *Wizard* have gone over to strip form. Nowadays, it seems, children nurtured on television cannot manage without a visual crutch.

Television's influence is reflected also in changing thematic fashions. Since the war, the Wild West has declined in popularity, the Foreign Legion and the Zulu Wars are out, the Frozen North has melted. Stronger now are soccer (earning its own mags, like pop), technological fantasy, martial arts (Desperate Dawg in the *Dandy* now does karate chops) and TV spinoffs. TV influence is ubiquitous: from Crowjack the bald crow cop in *Buster*, to Buytonic Boy, Birdman and Chicken, and the ultra-yukky Some Mummies Do 'Ave 'Em! strip (featuring Daddymummy, Mummymummy and Babbymummy) in *Sparky*. Telly and film trends are quickly picked up (more quickly in the humorous strips than the action strips): there are several shark stories (including one about a dentured shark called Gums), telly parodies, and Upstairs-Downstairs stories.

Three-quarters of kids' mags are for boys, and range from pure comics (with *Dandy* and *Beano*, *Beezer* and *Topper* holding up well) through the spectrum to pure action. The comics are largely dull, repetitive stuff, relying on slapstick, bold-face puns and magic: magic gloves, magic pockets, magic torches, x-ray glasses, magic transistor radios – all stretch, distort and enlarge things to spare the writer's imagination the trouble. The action mags are more characterful and more controversial: Orwell thought they encouraged 'gutter patriotism', and complained, more generally, that boys' weeklies endorsed two basic political assumptions: that nothing changes, and that foreigners are funny (Frank Richards, the creator of Bunter, asserted in his reply in *Horizon*, 'Foreigners *are* funny'). Undeterred, mags like *Battle*, *Warlord*, *Victor* and *Wizard* still put out the same creaking military and racial stereotypes. The British are gritty, witty loners, inventors of forces like the Chindits and the Long Range Desert Group: 'Truly, English Milord,' say a group of grovelling Incas in *Victor*, 'we name you right when we call you El Tigre.' Germans, while inspiring sneaky admiration for their weaponry and their Stuka chic, are always addressed as Fritzy and Heinie, Kraut and Jerry. The Japanese are yellow rats, rice-boys and slant-eyes, as in 'Have a faceful of rifle-butt, slant-eyes'. The French rarely feature; Russians are used to put Germans in a good light; other races play sporadic supporting roles. English Blacks (as opposed to Black Blacks) are just beginning to make an appearance: *Action* has a black footballer, and *Roy of the Rovers* a semi-black kid, or at least one badly drawn and badly shaded enough to be racially ambiguous.

It is, though, the very archaism of such stories and their attitudes which argues their present harmlessness. Just as Wodehouse is frozen at 1910, action mags are largely frozen at 1945. Thriller novels since that time have had the Russians as chief enemies, then (after Fleming) the Chinese, then (after LeCarré) ourselves, and now, mostly, the CIA and Nixon; but action mags are almost wholly unaware of such developments. Trapped in their time warp, they have developed no new enemies, no new politics (i.e., still no politics), and no new morality. Thus they remain astonishingly puritanical in most of their attitudes. Orwell feared the inculcation of middle-class social attitudes by *Gem* and *Magnet*; now, with the middle-class mags dead, the prevailing morality of the range of boys' mags is best described as macho-chapel. There is no smoking, no sex, and no drinking (except for the occasional glass of wine which indicates (a) upper-classness and (b) potential treachery); no gambling, no horse- or dog-racing, no cards. Gluttony is derided, good deeds earn rewards, family values are endorsed, biters bit, and come-uppance everywhere obtained. Like the action, the morality is a nostalgia fantasy.

Girls' mags are fewer, less stereotyped, more reactionary, more middle-class, and more laudably thoughtful. Boys' mags are all of a block, offering total reading for a certain number of years, and then leaving the adolescent to jump into specialist grown-up mags like *Dragster* or *Amateur Photographer*, or into newspapers, or into nothing. There are no bridging mags. Equally, the reading offered doesn't exactly project boys forward in their own lives: the only careers made attractive in their pages tend to be war hero and mad boffin. Girls' mags, from *Twinkle* (which amazingly explains things like maternal imprinting in ducklings) through *Bunty* and *Tammy* and *Spellbound* to *Mates*, *Jackie* and *OK & Hi!*, are conscious both of the age and development of their readers, and of the fact that when they stop reading comics they may need jobs. Though the commonest suggestions remain actress, nurse and ballet dancer, there are other plugs, for vet and aeronautical engineer, for instance.

As Bessie Bunter survives in girls' mags, so does the 'select private school' (unheard of now in boys' mags), and house spirit, and stories which begin, 'Fleur Dangerville, desperately unhappy at the thought of becoming a nun . . .' There is a high level of emotional fantasy – from social pornography about marrying Lord Damian Hunter to blub-kitsch about dead fiancés – which is more pernicious than the kraut-bashing of *Wizard*: most of the readers of *Jacky*, after all, are going to marry poor; few readers of *Wizard* are going to discover the disappointing banality of killing people. There is chiromancy, and silly pap about How to Tell a Fella by the Way he Eats, and Who would you Like to Kiss ('Lord Byron'; says Samantha Curry of Cowley, 'All right, so what if he is dead?'); but among it, a consciousness of readers being real, growing, and part of a particular society. There are sensible articles on grief, and being a failure; and advice about specific problems. This breath of reality has recently aroused the ire of Ronald Butt in *The Times*, which is always a good sign. He picked out *Mates* and *OK & Hi!* for censure, saying that copies had been 'sent to me by a social worker' (the current catch-and-condemn phrase, equivalent to 'bought under the counter'), and contained material of such 'irresponsibility' that he could not ask the editor to reproduce it. Well, *Mates* recently had an article about VD, caught by children under 15 whether Mr. Butt likes it or not; and *OK & Hi!* carried a letter from a girl worried about masturbation. The advice offered was as sensible as the running titles in *Bunty* ('Remember, girls! never accept lifts from strangers!'), and certainly provided long-overdue rectification: in the Twenties, the *Boy's Own Paper* used to fill its correspondence columns with terrifying warnings against masturbation. Here, in places, reality seems to be breaking in.

Weekend Competition

No 2448 **Set by Peter Alexander**

Following Bernard Levin and Roy Plomley in *The Times*, competitors are asked to find hidden characters in the plays of Shakespeare: e.g. Hamlet's Irish confidant ('Now might I do it, Pat . . .'), or the second ghost ('With Marshal Stalk hath he gone by our watch . . .'). You can monkey with the text, but not too radically. By 4 March.

No 2445 **Set by John Stanley**

Competitors were asked to reduce any well-known piece of verse or prose to telegrammese.

Report **by Little Keith**

A large and tolerably civilised entry. Certain candidates, though, set great store by mere brevity, which wasn't quite what I was after: a specific kind of violence has to be done to the language. (One or two competitors tried to intimidate me with actual telegrammes containing their yelped entries; I was not swayed by this.) £2 per cable.

ARRIVING CANTERBURY TOMORROW STOP ALL HUMAN LIFE IS HERE STOP WHO SHALL NOW SAY RELIGION DIVIDES STOP BEFRIENDED BY OFT-BEREAVED BUT JOYOUS WIDOW STOP MANY STORIES TO TELL STOP GEOFFREY

TIM HOPKINS

AIX GHENTWARDS NEWSBEARING HORSEWISE JORIS DIRCK RETIRED SELF ROLAND FINISHED.

BEING UNBEING RUBWORTHY PLEASE ADVISE.

C. VITA-FINZI

MACROMEDALLED SQUAWRIDDEN AMATEUR OCCULTIST SCOTS WARSUPREMO EUTHANASES SEMIGERIATRIC OVERNIGHT GUESTROYAL – VACANT SCONETHRONE ONSITS – DEFUSES DISSIDENTS – DEMATERIALISED INVITEE UPFOULS GRANDNOSH GETTOGETHER – MISSISMACBIG CONSORT UNCOOLS – UNLIVES – SPORRANINATWIST USURPER SUMMARILY DECAPITALISED CAESARBIRTHED THANE

COLIN KIMBERLEY

WOULD COMPARE THEE SUMMER DAY BUT THOU LOVELIER MORE TEMPERATE STOP BREATH BALMIER EYE COOLER COMPLEXION CLEARER STOP THY SUMMER ETERNAL PERMANENT FADELESS STOP UNSHADOWED BY DEATH SINCE IMMORTALISED HEREIN

UNAVOIDABLY DETAINED BY ELDERLY SAILOR

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
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CURSED AFTER SHOOTING ALBATROSS STOP CREWMATES STRUCK DEAD BY MYSTERIOUS VESSEL BUT INFORMANT REDEEMED THROUGH PRAYER STOP REGRET MISSING WEDDING BUT SADDER WISER THIS MORNING

GERTRUDE GERARD

UNKING APPEARS UNEMBODIEDLY UPBATTLEMENTS ELSINORE – ALLEGES UNFRATERNAL UNCRICKET – UPTIGHT AUTOSHRINK HEIR UPTIGHTENED – INITIATES METHODACT PROBE UNAVUNCULAR ACTIVITIES – RESULT POSITIVE – CRYPTINCEST-PSYCHOSTRIPSESSION UPFOLLOWS INCLOSET QUEENMUM – ACTS UPTIGHTLIEST – FINALISES HIGHCOST SELFDESTRUCT DESQUATTERIZATION DANETHRONE

TERRY TOWLING

ED. ELSINORE ARGUS: GHOST GRASSED PRINCE MAD POLONIUS STABBED OPHELIA DROWNED ROSENSTERN TOPPED QUEEN POISONED CLAUDIUS FOILED DITTO LAERTES AND HAMLET REST SILENCE FORTINBRAS PRESSCONF REPORT FOLLOWS

HORATIO

F. R. VESS

The Waste Land

HELLUVA DAMP PLACE APRIL UNRECOMMEND BORED KRAUTS POLYGLOTS PSEUDS HERMAPHRODITES LOWLIFES NEUROTICS COLLAPSING MASONRY ENTERTAINMENT LIMITED STOP ALAS POOR PHLEBAS STOP DROUGHT THREAT FISHING FAIRISH WILL BESTMAKE SHALOM

TOM DONNELLY

POST ITER DIFFICILLIMUM ITALIAN PERVENIMUS URBEM AEDIFICAVIMUS INDIGENAS VICIMUS FILIAM REGIS UXOREM DUXI OMNIA BENE EVENERUNT PAUSA CARTHAGININIENSES INIMICI NOBIS OB REGINAM MORTUAM SED NIHIL INTEREST PAUSA

AENEAS

A. L. V. EDWARDS

FIFTY-SECOND STREET STOP LOW AND DISHONEST DECADE STOP OFFENDED BY LINZ AFFAIR STOP THUCYDIDES HAD IT TAPED STOP HAVING A DRINK IN A BAR STOP EVERYONE WANTS IT STOP SURROUNDED BY DUMB DICKS STOP ALL WE NEED IS LOVE STOP FLASH IT OUT STOP

IVOR MORGAN

The Works of S. Beckett

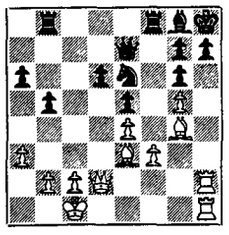
STOP

BRUNO HOLBROOK

Tony Miles

Chess

No 18 Report on Christmas Problems

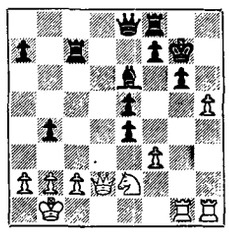


I first came across problem 13 in a local newspaper with the caption 'White to play and win' and solving times like '30 seconds – Master'. After staring at it for about 20 minutes I began to doubt my own ability. Finally I consulted the 'solution' and was less than satisfied. You will gather from this that those who also saw the problem and dutifully copied out '1. R x P ch! B x R; 2. Q-R2, K-N1 (or 2. . . . N x P; 3. Q-R4) 3. Q x B ch, K-B2; 4. Q x P (N6) ch!! K x Q; 5. B-R5 ch, K-R2; 6. B-B7 mate' did not get much credit. Why? *Well, after* 2. . . . N x P; 3. Q-R4, R-B5! *black is* a piece up for nothing. Nor is 3. B x N, Q x B ch; 4. K-N1, Q-R3 much better.

Quiet moves such as 1. K-N1 can be met by . . . R(B1)-Q1 followed by . . . N-B1. 1. R-R4 (intending Q-R2) is a good try, but not completely convincing after such replies as 1. . . . R(B1)-Q1; 2. B x N, B x B! 3. R x P ch, K-N1. In fact the best move, as a creditably high proportion of entrants suggested, is 1. B-KB5! Now 1. . . . P x B? loses quickly to 2. R x P ch! B x R; 3. P-N6, K-N1; 4. R x B (threatening R-R8 ch and Q-R2-R7); and if R(B1)-B1 then simply 5. Q-R2. If 1. . . Q-KB2; 2. R x P ch, B x R; 3. Q-R2, N x P; 4. B x N, Q-N1; 5. B-K6!

So black must choose between 1. . . . R x B and 1. . . . R(B1)-Q1 (if R(B1)-B1; 2. B x P, N-B1; 3. B-B5 with gain of time). Firstly 1. . . R(B1)-Q1. Now 2. R x P ch as some suggested, is met by 2. . . . B x R; 3. B x P, K-N1! and now 4. R x B, N-B1! or 4. B x B ch, K-B2 with some chances of surviving but the simple 2. B x P leaves white with a crushing position: e.g. 2. . . . N-B1; 3. B x P, B x B; 4. P-N6, Q-B3; 5. R x B ch, N x R; 6. R x N ch, K-N1; 7. Q-Q5 ch, K-B1; 8. R-R5! K-K1 (or 8. . . . Q x NP; 9. R-N5! Q-K1; 10. R-B5 ch, K-K2; 11. B-N5 ch, K-Q2; 12. R-B7 ch, K-B1; 13. B x R winning). 9. B-N5, Q x NP; 10. R-R8 ch, K-Q2; 11. R x R ch, K-B2!! (11. . . . R x R 12. Q-N7 ch and 13. Q-K7 mate). 12. Q-Q2!! R x R; 13. Q-R5 ch wins.

So 1. . . . R x B (!) 2. P x R, P x P. (Several entrants overlooked that this is possible now since 3. R x P ch, B x R; 4. P-N6, N-B1; 5. R x B ch is met by 5. . . . K-N1! and if 6. Q-R2, N x P!). Now white has no quick win but can establish a decisive positional superiority: 3. P-N6, N-B1; 4. P x P, B-B2 (recapturing is even worse) 5. P-KB4! followed by R-Q1 undermining the centre and forcing black to concede Q4 to the WB, e.g. 5. . . . P-K5; 6. R-Q1, P-Q4; 7. B-Q4 intending to transfer the Rs to the KN file when black's position collapses quickly.



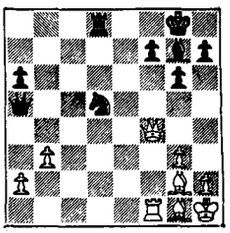
I encountered problem 14 in a more orthodox manner when I found it sitting in front of me during my game v. Libercon *from the England* Israel match at Haifa. White's attack is very dangerous and although black has some defensive tries they are not completely satisfactory.

1. . . . B x P ch seeks to solve the problem in drastic fashion. There is only one main line of analysis, but it contains several unexpected twists: 2. K x B, (other moves are obviously worse: 2. K-R1, Q-R5 or 2. K-B1, B-N6) Q-R5 ch; 3. K-N1, R-Q1! The first point. Now if 4. Q-B1, P-N6 wins or 4. N-B3, R x Q (or . . . P x N perhaps); 5. N x Q, KP x P is good for black. Libercon now played 4. Q x R and after Q x P ch; 5. K-R1, Q-R5 ch the game was agreed drawn. (Black cannot try for more. If 5. . . . R-B3; 6. R x P ch – among others – leaves white with at least a draw).

However, the more interesting try, which only one entrant found, is 4. N-Q4! R x N (not 4. . . . P-N6; 5. N-B5 ch *mating*); 5. Q-R2! *with the twin* threats of 6. Q x P ch and 6. RP x P. Amazingly black still has a defence! 5. . . . P-N6!! 6. Q x P ch, K-B1! (not 6. . . . K-N1; 7. P x NP, Q x P; 8. Q x R(B7), R-R5; 9. Q-B8 ch, K-N2; 10. Q-B3 ch). 7. P x NP, Q x P and (a) 8. Q x R(B7), R-R5! threatening both . . . Q-Q6 ch and . . . Q-R7 ch while 9. Q-B8 ch is met by K-K2; or (b) 8. Q x R(Q4), Q-B7 ch; 9. K-R2, R-B5! and in both cases white must lose his queen, and his king remains too exposed to prevent black from drawing.

No entrant actually solved both problems, but J. D. Taylor wins a £5 prize for the best attempt at Problem 14. All the best solutions to Problem 13 won prizes in the full December competition, the results of which are: 1st H. Garfath (£15), 2nd G. Abrahams, A. J. Sobey and I. Kastanas (£10 each), with consolation prizes to R. Smith and J. Gill (£2.50 each).

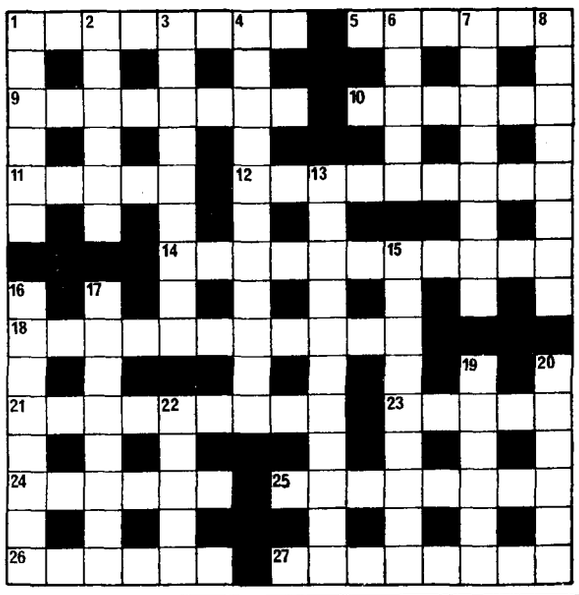
Problem 18:
White to play. What is the most effective conclusion? Entries to me at the NEW STATESMAN post-marked not later than 9 February.



Solution to problem 16: 1. P-B6! B x P; (or . . . B-R1; 2. P-B7) 2. R x B, R x R; 3. N x P Resigns. (If 3. . . . K-N1; 4. Q x P ch, R-N2; 5. N-B6 ch).

Weekend Crossword 1200

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1200, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 8 Feb.



ACROSS

1. Bird that spends its old age in the shell! (8).
5. Vehicle in which an actor carries his crippled son (6).
9. The changing patterns in church architecture (8).
10. The most learned lives in our part of the world (6).
11. One who fails in a close race (5).
12. Creature which makes a soldier return to a mountain after all (9).
14. Battle to make the cake stay too long in the oven (11).
18. Ship which could make a peer content (11).
21. Precipitate producer (9).
23. What you are trying to do (5).
24. Depressing place to eat in (6).
25. One who praises the enemy leader so guilt is dispersed (8).
26. Most at liberty when heartless fetters are broken (6).
27. Trees Her Royal Highness chopped up for the beater (8).

DOWN

1. Make one's home in a place in Yorkshire (6).
2. Out of order please pass (6).
3. Attractive one who can be taken away from her parents? (9).
4. It is fitting in a murderer to prepare food for an explorer (7, 4).
6. Impressive in the extreme? (5).
7. Range for cooking crumpets (8).
8. Way of getting there which gives one only a short time to call (8).
13. Scan but not notice (4, 7).
15. Broken set is scattered but it is found by the roadside (9).
16. One of those drinks which one makes if in mixed parties (8).
17. Wrongly tied NATO to the deterrent (8).
19. Looking rather cold although one is in apparent warmth (6).
20. Reformed gambler (6).
22. A wise man is Augustus, to follow his mother (5).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1198

T	E	L	E	M	A	R	K		M	A	N	G	E	R
A		I		A		E				D		O		E
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A		S		N				L		D		C		H
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Prizewinners to No 1198

Rosalind Gilbert (Hoddesdon)
Joseph Fox (Redhill)
Diana Cook (New Zealand)

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APPOINTMENTS

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850 - $18,389.

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Applications are invited for a Lectureship in Soviet Sociology, vacant from 1 October 1977. Preference will be given to candidates specialising *in* industrial sociology. Salary will be within the range of £3,333 – £6,655 per annum (plus superannuation) depending on age and experience.

Further particulars may be obtained from the Assistant Registrar (RS), University of Birmingham, P.O. Box 363, Birmingham B15 2TT, to whom applications should be submitted by 1 March 1977. Quote ref. CR/NS.

THE POETRY SOCIETY requires as soon as possible: Bookshop/Printshop Manager – responsible for running the Society's printshop, maintaining bookings, accounts, orders, experience on offset duplicator; bookshop duties include retail & mail-order sales, ordering, billing. Salary: £3,200 p.a. Assistant to Education Secretary – responsible *for organising verse-speaking examinations*, ability to meet deadlines and maintain accurate bookings system, typing essential, secretarial skills. Salary: £2,600 p.a. Candidates for above positions write for particulars to Gen. Secretary, Poetry Society, 21 Earls Court Square, London SW5. Secretarial Assistant – typing essential, some dictation; part- or full-time at £2,000-£2,500 p.a., part-time pro-rata, 25 hours a week min. Ring for appointment: 01-373 7861.

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ARTS CENTRE YORK requires 2 General Assistants to join the present Directors in a full-time team of 4. Applicants should have technical or administrative experience in a related field. £2,000 p.a., long & *irregular hours. Written applications with* CV by 19 February to The Directors, Arts Centre York, Micklegate, York.

WANTED – Trade Union Organiser for small specialist professional trade union. Position is based at Newton le Willows, Merseyside. Send fullest details to Harry Shindler, National Secretary, NALHM, 9 Coombe Lane, London SW20. Closing date Friday 4 Feb.

EDITORIAL SECRETARY required for small, lively department to work for two Editors commissioning books in humanities and technical education subjects. Initiative and the ability to cope while editors are away from the office is necessary. For interview and further details ring Claire L'Enfant or Kevin McDermott at Hutchinson's, 01-387 2888.

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to be responsible for welfare advice to students within the West Ham area.
The person appointed will be a member of a team whose objective is to provide services for students in order to solve any problems that they may have. No specific qualification is required, although social work training could be valuable. Relevant experience is desirable as is being a car owner. Some knowledge of the social and physical geography of East London would be valuable.
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Further information and application forms are available from: The Personnel Office, North East London Polytechnic, 109 The Grove, London E15 1EN. (Telephone 01-555 0811 x 32) please quote reference A255/77.
Closing date: 11 February, 1977.

NELP North East London Polytechnic

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Saturday 29 January 1977
2 p.m. – 5 p.m.

The Gulbenkian Foundation Committee of Enquiry into the Training of Musicians is due to report later this year. Before making their recommendations, they would like to invite performers, teachers, students, conductors composers, managers, critics, indeed anyone with an interest in the training of professional musicians to put their views at this Special Open Meeting. Whatever your interest in music, don't miss this opportunity to come along and put your views.

ALL VIEWS WELCOME
Admission Free

Exhibitions

GANYMED GALLERY, 11 Gt Turnstile WC1. 405 9836. Original lithographs by Lowry, Moore, Boyd. 18th and 19th century prints by Daumier, Gavarni, Bonington etc.

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FELIX H. MAN: Pioneer of photo-journalism. 20 Jan.-13 Feb. Mon.-Fri. 10-6, Sats. 10-1. Admission free. National Book League, 7 Albemarle St, W1. 01-493 9001. Nearest tubes, Green Park & Piccadilly Circus.

Theatres

ALMOST FREE THEATRE, 9 Rupert St, W1. 01-485 6224. Open 10 Jan. 'Patty Hearst' by William Tanner. 1.15 p.m. Mon.-Sat.

FESTIVAL OF MIME & Visual Theatre at the Cockpit, Gateforth St, NW8. 01-402 5081. Perfs. 8 p.m. Until Sat. British Theatre of the Deaf in 'The Most Dangerous Animal of All' by John Abulafia. Sun.-Tues. Annie Stainer in 'Moon'. Wed.-Thurs. Chris Harris in 'Kemp's Jig'.

FRENCH INSTITUTE, Queensberry Place, SW7. (tel: 589 6211 ext. 40) The 'Théatre du Marais' presents 'Histoire d'Amour' by Yves Navarre, on Thurs. 3 & Fri. 4 Feb. at 7.30 p.m. Tickets obtainable at Institute. 90p studs, groups of more than 10: £1.30.

HAMPSTEAD THEATRE, 722 9301. 'The Last Meeting of the Knights of the White Magnolia' by Preston Jones. Prevs from 3 Feb. 8 p.m.

NATIONAL THEATRE, 928 2252. Olivier & Lyttelton repertoire: 'Playboy of the Western World' & 'Tales from the Vienna Woods': 'Jumpers', 'Counting the Ways' & 'No Man's Land': see daily press for dates & times.

ROYAL COURT, 730 1745. Athol Fugard's triumphant 'Sizwe Bansi is Dead' Evenings 8 p.m. Sats. 5 & 8.30.

THEATRE ROYAL, WINDSOR, 95 61107. Until 5 Feb. 'Jack and the Beanstalk' with Trevor Bannister and Bryan Burdon.

ARTS THEATRE. 836 3334

'Worth queuing for from breakfast time' Financial Times.

TOM STOPPARD'S DIRTY LINEN

Mon. - Thurs. at 8.30, Fri. & Sat. 7.00 & 9.15.

Opera

Hammersmith Municipal Opera presents

LA DAME BLANCHE

(The White Lady) sung in English by **Francois Boieldieu** with Merril Jenkins, Alexander Magri, Brenda McLean, Neil Heyland, Paul Ardon-Griffiths, Emyr Green, Michael Bauer, Sonya Nerdrum

Fulham Municipal Orchestra

Full company and chorus

Joseph Vandernoot
Conductor

Brenda Stanley
Producer

Fulham Town Hall,
Fulham Broadway SW6.

Thurs. 10th, Fri. 11th, Sat. 12th February 1977, 7.30 p.m.

Tickets £1.50, £1.10, 75p, 50p (60p, 40p, 30p, 20p OAP) from **Entertainments Office, Town Hall, King St W6 9JU.**

Box Office 741 3696.

Poetry

POETRY PRIZES TOTAL £200 – Michael Johnson Memorial Forms, S.a.e. Ver Poets MJ/NS 61 Chiswell Green Lane, St Albans.

ARTS COUNCIL POETRY LIBRARY

105 PICCADILLY, LONDON W1V 0AU. Tel: 01-629 9495

Membership is free. Open to the Public. A collection of modern poetry covering the period from 1930 to the present.

Books are available for reference and loan. The Library is situated between Hyde Park Corner and Green Park underground stations. Hours: 10 a.m. to 12.30, 1.30 to 5 p.m. Mon.-Fri., Thurs. late night opening until 7 p.m.

Charles Osborne: Literature Director
Jonathan Barker: Poetry Librarian

Meetings

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON, Gower St, WC1E 6BT. Lunch Hour Lectures, 1.20 to 2. Admission free. 1 Feb. 'The Tools of Thought in Ancient Egypt' by Professor H. S. Smith; 3 Feb. 'London Pronunciation' by Dr J. C. Wells.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON: The Cassal Lecture 1977 entitled: 'Lecture Plurielle Du Texte Poétique' will be given by Professor Jean Burgos (Centre Universitaire de Savoie) at the Senate House, University of London, (Beveridge Hall), Malet Street, London WC1, at 5.30 p.m. on Mon., 7 Feb., 1977. Adm. free without ticket. Academic Registrar.

PIERRE-JAKEZ HELIAS, author, will give a lecture on 'Le cheval d'orgueil, essai d'analyse d'une civilisation populaire' on Tuesday 1 February at 6.15 p.m. at the French Institute, Queensberry Place, London SW7. Tel: 589 6211 ext. 38. Adm. free.

YOUNG FABIAN GROUP SEMINAR. Sat. 29 January 10 a.m. Cole Room, 11 Dartmouth St. SW1. 'The Demands on Modern Trade Unionism' with Tony Benn MP and Trade Union speakers. Tickets at door 50p or from Administration Officer, Fabian Society, 11 Dartmouth St. London SW1.

THE SCOTTISH LABOUR PARTY. You are invited to attend a Public Meeting in the North Room, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn, 7.30 p.m. Wed. 2 Feb., to form a London Branch of SLP. Speakers: Jim Sillars & Alec Neil (Gen. Sec.). Further inqs. to: Alec Neil, Room 267, 12 Waterloo St, Glasgow. Tel. 041-248 7104.

ADLERIAN SOCIETY. 'One Family's Council – an Experiment in Democracy'. Malcolm & Helen Stern present an account of personal experience of a family council. Tues. 1 Feb. 7.30 p.m. Alliance Hall, Palmer St, SW1. Visitors welcome 30p. (Studs 10p).

SUNDAY 30 JANUARY: 'Fight Against Racism' 2.30-6 p.m. seminar on anti-Racism with Paul Rose MP. 8-11 p.m. 'Divide and Rule Britannia' a play on racism in Britain, a discussion with folksingers (50p afternoon, £1 evening) at 37 Broadhurst Gardens, NW6 (Finchley Rd tube). Details: Ruth (01) 328 2554 (day) Peter (01) 794 0379 (evgs). Organised by Young Mapam in assoc. with Camden Committee for Community Relations & Camden Against Racism.

GREAT PHILOSOPHERS. Survey of Western Philosophy including Plato, Spinoza, Kant. Programme devised and led by Kishor Parekh. Commencing 7 p.m. Thursday 10 February at the Theosophical Society, 50 Gloucester Place, W1 (01-935 9261).

BUDDHIST SOCIETY, 5 Eccleston Square, London SW1. Sat. 29 Jan. 3 p.m. 'Open Day'. Tues. 1 Feb. 6.30 p.m. 'Introducing Buddhism'. Wed. 2 Feb. 6.30 p.m. Public Lecture 'The Zen Way' – Irmgard Schloegl (to coincide with the recently published book under the same title). All welcome. Send s.a.e. for full programme.

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'The article (by David Astor) is a lie,' Bill Barnes, NATSOPA chapel, The Times.

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21 Russell St. Covent Garden, WC2; or £6 for all the six issues of 1977.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE, 54 Holland Pk, W11. Sun. 30 Jan. Questions and Answers: by Swami Bhavyananda at 5 p.m. All welc. Vedanta mag. 40p.

THEOSOPHY. Informal Forum on Basic Theosophy. Sun. 30 Jan. 8 p.m. S.a.e. for free pamphlet, book list, prog. of talks, ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2.

YOUNG FABIANS SEMINAR
on
MODERN TRADE UNIONISM
Tony Benn & John Spiller
Saturday 29 January
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Admission 50p
11 Dartmouth Street SW1
Tel: 930 3077 for details

TRANSPORT WITHOUT WASTE

The Islington Society, National Transport Conference 26 Feb. at City University, London. 'The Solutions to Transport Problems' with: John Adams, Glyn Charlesworth, Christopher Nash, Frank Higgins, Jonathan Tyler, Jenny Potter.

Tickets £2.00 inc. lunch. Bar available. Information:
133 Graham St, London N1.

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REAPPEARANCE OF THE CHRIST — THE WORLD TEACHER — AND THE MASTERS OF THE WISDOM
from the esoteric Teachings of the Master D.K. to Alice A. Bailey for the New Age of the One Humanity. Talks by Benjamin Creme

FRIENDS' HOUSE, Euston Rd, NW1. Tues. 1 Feb., Thurs. 10, 17 and 24 Feb. all at 7 p.m.

You are invited to take part in a meditation/transmission of energies from the Spiritual Hierarchy of Masters.
Free. Donations Welcome.

Courses

FRENCH INSTITUTE, Evening classes in French language, Civilisation and Translation. Registration from 26 January to 9 February. Courses commence 21 February. Write to 14 Cromwell Place, London SW7 2JR (s.a.e.) or tel. 589 6211 Ext. 45.

ARBOURS TRAINING PROGRAMME for Psychotherapists. A new course starts Sept. '77. Write for further details to: Arbours Training Committee, 55 Dartmouth Park Road, NW5, enclosing a 9" x 3" s.a.e.

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